DWB

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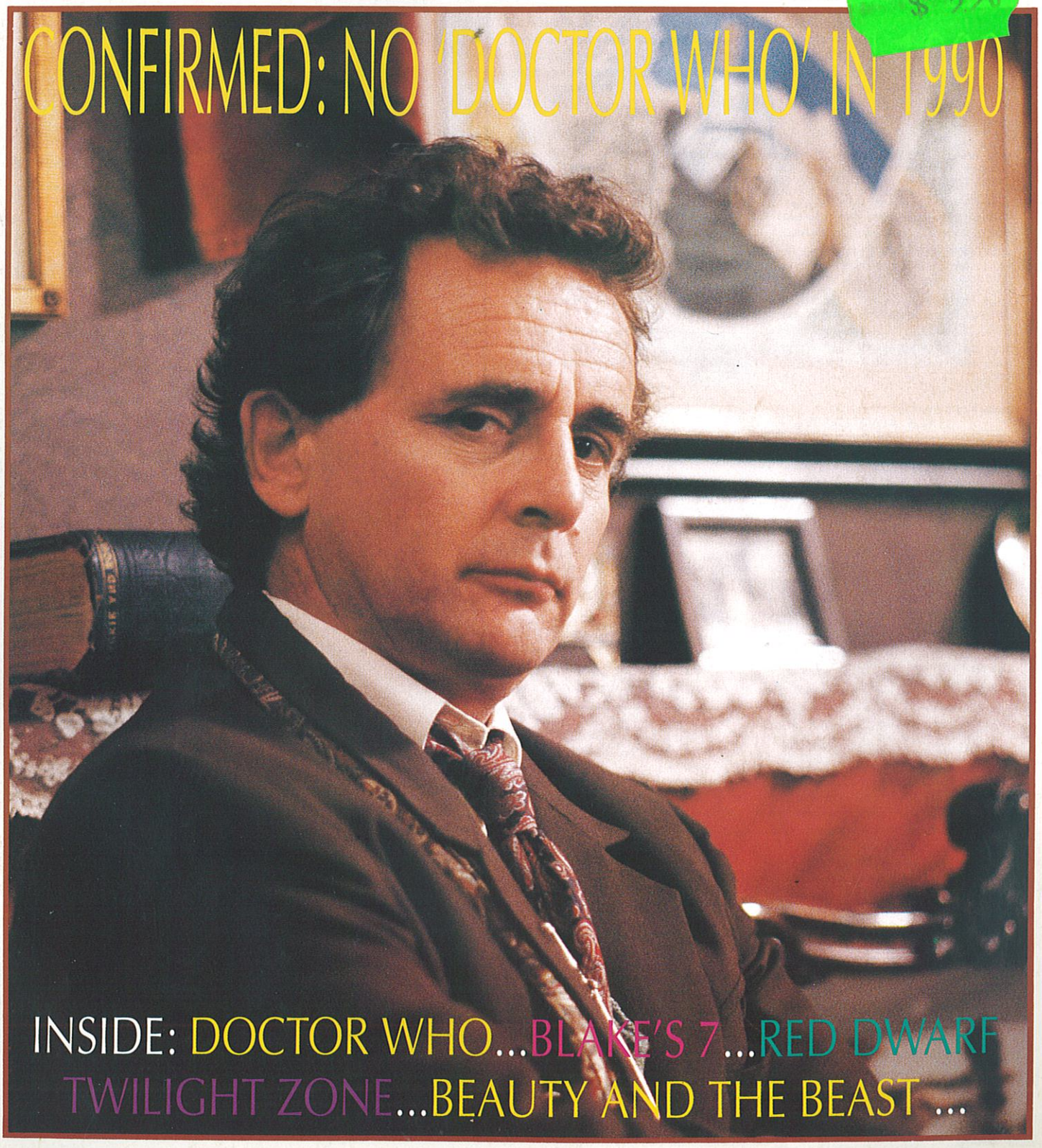
CONFIRMED: NO 'DOCTOR WHO' IN 1990



INSIDE: DOCTOR WHO...BLAKE'S 7...RED DWARF
TWILIGHT ZONE...BEAUTY AND THE BEAST ...

The Journal of British Fantasy Television

P.O. BOX 1015, BRIGHTON BN2 2YU

IT SEEMS HARD to believe, but already shop windows are beginning to glisten with holly and tinsel as the end of another year approaches (can it really be only two months since I got sunburnt on Brighton Beach?!). This has, of course, been a major year for D W B, the first in which we expanded our coverage beyond just 'Doctor Who', and what a popular decision that move has since turned out to be! In our new, colourful format, D W B is read by twice as many people as read it two years ago - and our readership continues to grow in Britain, as well as America, Canada and Australia! Next month we'll be announcing details of our 1990 subscriptions and further marginal changes to D W B's format brought about by reader demand and the current telefantasy climate. Whatever the changes, you can rest assured D W B will remain the best-informed monthly telefantasy magazine available.

'Til December, GARY

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B S B HEADS TO JUPITER'S MOON

BRITISH SATELLITE BROADCASTING (BSB) has become the first satellite broadcaster to commission a major drama, and it's science fiction!

The series will consist of 150 half-hour episodes and is provisionally entitled Jupiter's Moon. It is being produced in partnership between Primetime and Andromeda.

The multi-million pound drama follows the lives of students and crew aboard a space polytechnic orbiting Callisto, a moon of Jupiter. It will be screened four times a week on BSB's Galaxy Channel.

Jupiter's Moon has been developed by Richard Price of Primetime Television, one of the UK's largest independent production and distribution companies, ill-fated soap producer William Smethurst (the series has been dubbed Crossroads In Space!) and Matt McCarthy of Andromeda Television.

BSB Chief Executive John Gau claims: "This is the first continuing drama series from an independent producer since Channel 4 invested in Brookside."

BSB is hoping to begin broadcasting its three satellite channels from Spring 1990, although the infamous Squarial dishes have not been manufactured yet. **Mark James**

THE 'RED DWARF' SUCCESS STORY

A THIRD SEASON of the cult comedy series 'Red Dwarf' is at present being recorded to follow the recent repeats of episodes from season two, due to start a six-week run on Tuesday November 14th at 9.00pm on BBC2.

US FAN MAIL

Since it was launched, slightly over a year ago, **Red Dwarf** has developed a large following on both sides of the Atlantic. Aired on the PBS network in America, it has attracted more audience response than any British show since Monty Python's Flying Circus. It is currently scheduled for a prime-time repeat, and the cast has been inundated with American fan mail.

There have been four separate bids to turn the series into a movie, including HBO, Warner Brothers, Steve Haft (producer of the current American blockbuster The Dead Poets Society) and John Daley (The Last Emperor and Platoon).

A **Red Dwarf** novel, written by Bob Grant and Doug Naylor, the series' writers/producers, is due to be published by Penguin, in November, with an initial print run of 75,000.

NEW CREW MEMBERS

The new season features two new regular cast members: Robert Llewelyn recreates the rôle of Kryten, originally played in the second season episode of that name by David Ross. Viewers may remember that Kryten was a servile android taught to rebel by Dave Lister.

Hattie Hayridge (previously seen in Just For Laughs and Friday Night Live) replaced Norman Lovett as the ship's computer necessitating a sex change, a move which has been brought about by Norman leaving for his own series.

MORE SPECTACULAR

The third series promises to be more spectacular than ever before. The special effects team, headed once again by Peter Wragg, is currently creating a ferocious genetic mutant, countless space chases and crashes, flaming comets, black holes and time warps. This will be achieved with the use of computer motion-controlled cameras and the state of the art digital video effects generator.

In the new series the crew finally land on Earth only to discover that time, and the inhabitants, are both running backwards. Special crowd scenes were shot in Manchester with 300 extras. Lister's mind is transplanted into Rimmer's body - and visa versa; they discover a way to walk into photographs and change history; get stranded on an Arctic moon; and are terrorised by a chameleonic mutant.

STUNTS

The **Red Dwarf** team perform all their own stunts - including being thrown through plate glass windows, being blown across Arctic wastes, diving under ice-cold lakes, getting blown up, ejected into space and holding boxes which explode into flames. They are said normally to do this without (much) complaint, but the scene which called for 3 cwt. of laxative crystals blown in their faces at 50 mph to simulate a blizzard was not the most popular suggestion! Having tables and chairs 'un-smashed' over their heads in a backwards bar-room brawl is another stunning special effect for the new season.

Guest stars scheduled to appear in the first episode alone include Graham Chapman and Koo Stark.

PETER PRITT

EXCLUSIVE: LIBERATOR MODEL LAUNCH DATE ANNOUNCED

THE LIBERATOR model kit is the most important piece of 'Blake's 7' merchandising this decade. That's a big statement, but one few would dispute.

Hints about its development were given to me some months ago (see DWB#64), but now I can exclusively reveal details of the Comet Miniatures' project.

RUMOURS

In years gone by, there have always been unsubstantiated rumours of a Liberator injection mould kit, produced in far off countries without licence, and never seen in Britain. Nobody could prove they actually existed, and subsequently the idea of a Liberator kit passed into **Blake's 7** fan mythology. Now the legend has become reality.

A year ago Comet Miniatures - specialists in sci-fi models and the last models company whose product is still made entirely in Britain - were looking for a new labour of love. Comet's owner, Tony James, has always been a **Blake's 7** fan, and decided to seek a licence to make the one thing in his mind that epitomised the series - the Liberator.

OLD LOGO

The path to producing the high quality replica that Comet wanted has at times not been an easy one to tread. Everything had to be perfect, and one of the biggest stumbling blocks was convincing the BBC that the **original Blake's 7** logo had to be used. The new (fourth season) logo is favoured by the BBC (as Lyle Stuart's recent book reprints have shown), but Comet argued that the old one epitomised a different era - the era of the Liberator. I expect many will be relieved to hear Comet won out in the end and both the box and the model's stand will carry the old **Blake's 7** logo.

The dynamic duo of Hancock and Nation, normally well known for their protective attitude, were surprisingly easy to deal with. They felt a Liberator model was long overdue, and trusted Comet to do it well.

It may surprise many people to learn that there is no definitive design for the Liberator. The original plans by Roger Murray-Leach (shown in Space Voyager issue one) are only half the story. Some of the design, such as an **oval** engine area, would have been a nightmare to create and repair.

REFERENCE

The BBC models themselves (there were three in all made - two one foot and a three foot model) were inconsistent to the extent that even the relative dimensions of the central columns were different - the smaller models being 'fatter'. Comet's design is true to the main three foot model (used for all the close-up shots) which was blown up at the end of the third season.

Although production photographs have been available for reference, Paul Holroyd - who worked on the series and supplied the drawings for the superb Technical Manual (ref:DWB#67) - has been on hand to help with the finer points of the design. As indeed has the BBC SFX design supremo Mat Irvine, who tried to persuade Airfix to do the kit back in 1978. He is detailing the instruction sheet.

With a seven-inch circumference and nine-inch length, the Liberator model is of a similar size to the recently-released **Star Trek** Enterprise model kit.

IMPRESSIVE

There is no doubt, however, which looks the more impressive.

Whilst the Enterprise model is made up of some 25 parts, the Liberator is constructed from over 300 finely crafted injection-moulded pieces, including 80 of etched brass (used for building up the solar panels etc.). This makes it the most major construction kit to be made in this country over the last 10 years.

By keeping all the production process in Britain, Comet has been able to oversee all areas of production and ensure both quality and accuracy.

As well as producing a superb model, Comet - in common with the series - also has a good sense of humour, and the box itself carries an in-joke. The scale is given as 1 : 1/5 millispacials and the kit is officially launched in the first week of December, retailing at just under £20, although DWB readers can order their Liberators now by following the instructions on the special advert this issue (back page).

JOHN H.ELSEN

FANS MOURN PASSING OF 'PRISONER' LANDMARK

THE THATCHED BARN HOTEL, which is well-remembered by fans of 'The Prisoner' as being the secret agent's local pub in the episode The Girl Who Was Death, is to be pulled down to make way for a large modern hotel complex.

The Elstree Moat House, as it is now known, is less than half a mile from the site of M G M Borehamwood studios near Watford where the cult 60's series was made. The studios themselves were levelled in 1969 to provide space for a large industrial estate.

The demolition men move in in early November and **The Prisoner** society will be saying farewell in its own way by holding the last official function there before its demise.

BRIEFLY...

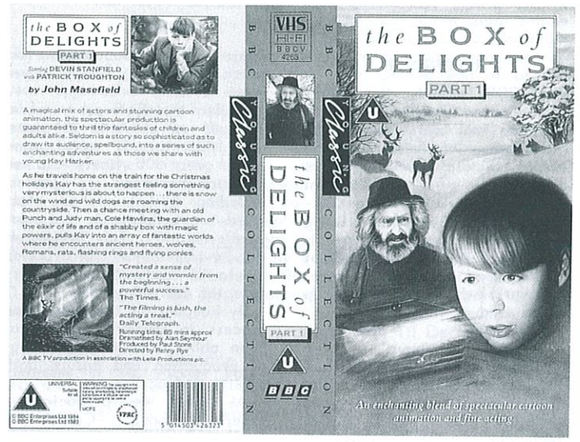
ITV CENSORS have axed a total of ten episodes - almost a half - of the second season run of **Beauty and the Beast**, supposedly to avoid falling foul of Lord rees-Mogg's new Broadcasting Standards Council. One of last season's banned episodes featured Vincent protecting a former IRA terrorist from his vengeful ex-colleagues. (See Review)

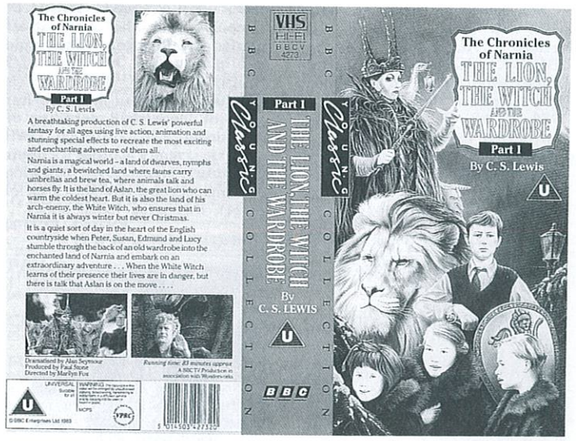
ENGALE MARKETING are about to launch two new postcard sets to compliment their series of Gerry Anderson and Classic television postcards. They will feature colour stills from both **Star Trek** and **Star Trek - The Next Generation** with each set (one for each series) consisting of 16 cards and costing £3.95 each.

Also new from Engale are four large colour A1-size photo posters with a Gerry Anderson theme. Two feature Thunderbird 2, another shows the whole of the Tracey family relaxing at Lady Penelope's, and the fourth is a 'full length photo of the debonair Captain Scarlet. Each poster costs £2.99. Write to: Engale Marketing, 332 Lytham Road, Blackpool FY4 1DW for further details.

ITV have removed the new series of **The Saint,** starring Simon Dutton, from the schedules after just two episodes, claiming the rest of the £7.5 million series will be back next spring. LWT insists this was always intended, although it is believed the scheduling of the major new action series Saracen the same night on ITV, together with the first two episode ratings of below eight million, may have prompted the need for a relaunch.

VIDEOS OF DELIGHT


the BOX of DELIGHTS
PART 1
by John Masefield
A magical mix of actors and stunning cartoon animation, this spectacular production is guaranteed to thrill the fantasies of children and adults alike. Seldom is a story so sophisticated as to draw its audience, spellbound, into a series of such enchanting adventures as those we share with young Kay Harker.
As he travels home on the train for the Christmas holidays Kay has the strangest feeling something very mysterious is about to happen . . . there is snow on the wind and wild dogs are roaming the countryside. Then a chance meeting with an old Punch and Judy man, Cole Hawlins, the guardian of the elixir of life and of a shabby box with magic powers, pulls Kay into an array of fantastic worlds where he encounters ancient heroes, wolves, Romans, rats, flashing rings and flying ponies.
"Created a sense of mystery and wonder from the beginning . . . a powerful success." The Times.
"The filming is lush, the acting a treat." Daily Telegraph.
Running time: 85 mins approx
Dramatised by Alan Seymour
Produced by Paul Stone
Directed by Penny Rye
A BBC TV production in association with Lola Productions plc.
BBC Classic Collection
An enchanting blend of spectacular cartoon animation and fine acting.


The Chronicles of Narnia
THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE
Part 1
By C. S. Lewis
A breathtaking production of C. S. Lewis' powerful fantasy for all ages using live action, animation and stunning special effects to recreate the most exciting and enchanting adventure of them all.
Narnia is a magical world – a land of dwarves, nymphs and giants, a bewitched land where fauna carry umbrellas and brew tea, where animals talk and horses fly. It is the land of Aslan, the great lion who can warm the coldest heart. But it is also the land of his arch-enemy, the White Witch, who ensures that in Narnia it is always winter but never Christmas.
It is a quiet sort of day in the heart of the English countryside when Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy stumble through the back of an old wardrobe into the enchanted land of Narnia and embark on an extraordinary adventure . . . When the White Witch learns of their presence their lives are in danger, but there is talk that Aslan is on the move . . .
Dramatised by Alan Seymour
Produced by Paul Stone
Directed by Marilyn Fox
Running time: 83 minutes approx
A BBCTV Production in association with Wonderworks
BBC Classic Collection

BBC VIDEO have released a range of tapes featuring classic children's fantasy series.

Under the banner of The Young Classics Collection, the range includes **The Box of Delights** and **The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,** both produced by Paul Stone and featuring superb animation, live action and special effects.

Both titles are released over two cassettes, with each tape lasting over 80 minutes, though unlike their **Doctor Who** counterpart (**The Daleks**) each set retails at the reasonable price of £14.99.

With Christmas just around the corner, it is worth noting a famous quote by Narnia author C.S.Lewis: "A children's story which is only enjoyed by children is a bad children's story".

The Box of Delights U (parts 1 and 2) cat.no: BBC V 4263
The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe U (parts 1 and 2) cat.no: BBC V 4273.

US ROUND-UP

SUPERBOY, the TV series, continues despite its dreadful reception both in the US and the UK. The production has moved from its old base in Florida (Disney/MGM) to Universal Studios.

A fifth Superman film is on the cards, although Christopher Reeve has not yet been connected with the project. A new Superman for the 1990's ?

A NEW WONDER WOMAN TV series is being planned for syndication which, like **Star Trek: The Next Generation,** is a very successful route to make an impact on American TV. Warner Bros are behind the project and plan a Fall 1990 debut. Lynda Carter is not expected to return so a new face will be cast as the Amazonian princess with super powers.

Mark James

BRIEFLY...

TITAN are thought to be interested in obtaining the rights to reprint the three Ace **Prisoner** books as well as the nine Panther/Berkley Medallion **The Avengers** books, which are all highly sought after by fans of the two series.

ADAM WEST is bitter he wasn't offered a rôle or even consulted about the **Batman** movie. Interviewed in the US TV Guide recently, he said: "I created the **Batman** rôle, and these new producers could've had it all. I've wondered why they didn't call me, but I'm really not bothered by it. I just know that my **Batman** was far more likeable."

REHEARSALS have begun for a second series of the Granada junior SF show **Erasmus Micromen,** starring Ken Campbell as the black hole inspector and world saver. Seven 20-minutes episodes will be produced. Nabil Shaban had originally been offered the lead rôle in the first series, but was rejected by producers for being "too frightening". Shaban has maintained the producers discriminated against him because of his disability.

THE STARSHIP ENTERPRISE pewter replica mentioned last issue has been put on hold as the advertising of the product has yet to be approved by Paramount. Full details soon...

CHARLES DANCE, the genetics scientist from **First Born,** is to play **The Phantom of the Opera** in a new TV series based on the Gaston Le Roux novel.

THE FIRST FEW episodes of the original **Twilight Zone** series on C4 have achieved between 1.2 and 1.5 million viewers, which is fairly good for such a late night slot.

SNAKES AND LADDERS: John Gordon Sinclair and Adrian Edmonson star in this seven-part futuristic black comedy, shot on location in Yorkshire. Written by Laurence Marks and Maurice Gran - creators of Shine On Harvey Moon and The New Statesman - **Snakes and Ladders** is set in 1999, where Trade Unions and clean water are nothing more than fading memories, and the only remaining border in Europe is the one that separates the affluent South from the impoverished North. Beginning on Tuesdays on C4 from October 17th, the series is based around Scottish no-hoper Gavin(Sinclair) and Oxford drop-out Giles(Edmonson) whose identities are mixed up by the ruling 'Computer'... MJ

SEASON 26 RATINGS DISASTER

THE NOTABLE LACK of pre-publicity took its toll on the start of Season 26, with episode one of 'Battlefield' achieving the lowest-ever rating figure of 3.1 million.

This figure - beating the previous low of 3.5 million held by episode eight of **The War Games** - is so poor it narrowly failed to register in the top 100 TV programmes, an unprecedented occurence for a 'first-nighter'.

The fact that the second episode actually attracted more viewers scoring 3.9 million (for the last few seasons the second episode has often dropped quite considerably) indicates that many people were, and still are, unaware that **Doctor Who** is even back on television.

AWARENESS

In a bid to boost public awareness of the new series, John Nathan-Turner - in one of his last major tasks for the programme - has arranged press publicity calls for the last two stories, which will feature Sylvester McCoy, Sophie Aldred and guest stars from **The Curse of Fenric** and **Survival.**

Coronation Street's audience actually dipped quite considerably in the week **Doctor Who** returned to oppose it. In the seven days before, the Wednesday/Sunday episodes together netted an awesome 20.07 million, but the following week this figure fell to 15.3 million, of which only 11.3 tuned in to the September 6th episode. If the figures are to be believed, this means only 14.4 million were watching either BBC1 or ITV between 7.30-8.00pm on September 6th - also an unprecedented figure for the time-slot in the opening week of the new autumn television season.

Here is a list of comparable programmes broadcast in the same week as **Battlefield** part one:

Coronation Street(Wed)	11.3
EastEnders(Thurs)	10.9
Neighbours(5.40 av')	9.6
All Creatures'	11.3(10)
Telly Addicts	7.9(32)
The Saint	7.8(36)
Saturday Roadshow(5.45)	7.0(45)
Rolf Harris Cartoon Time	5.7(55)
Wogan	5.3(62)
Beauty and the Beast	5.3(63)
Watchdog(Mon,7.35pm)	4.4(69)
Blue Peter Special	4.5(74)
Scooby Doo	3.6(87)
Gardeners World	3.4(92)
Doctor Who	3.1(100+)

'WHO BACK ON HIATUS AFTER SEASON 26

DOCTOR WHO is finished as a BBC-produced series, in line with their recent policy of increasingly contracting its programmes to independent production companies.

OB UNIT DISBANDED

Indeed, no drama series for Autumn 1990 have yet been scheduled for inhouse production, and it seems likely that comedy and current affairs will be the only programmes to remain at the BBC.

Already the BBC has disbanded its OB unit, which used to record **Doctor Who** on location, and in future OB facilities - to be used for sporting events like Wimbledon - will be hired when needed.

All of this streamlining comes as a result of a directive issued in 1987 by Director General Michael Checkland for the BBC to tighten its purse-strings.

Therefore, as we exclusively reported last issue (and hinted at in DWB#56 - July 1988!), **Doctor Who** is to be tendered to an independent production company, five of which are currently believed to have put in bids to produce it.

VERITY BIDS

These are John Nathan-Turner's own Brighton-based production company, Victor Pemberton's Saffon, Chris(**Starwatch**)Leach's GAIA Productions, movie producers Coast to Coast and, in a surprising though welcome move, Cinema Verité - the production company owned by **Doctor Who**'s original producer Verity Lambert, who has often professed an intention of putting the series back on the right rails in line with Sydney Newman's original premise.

An interesting sideline is that one of her producers is noneother than Philip Hinchcliffe - the man who steered **Doctor Who** through its most popular phase during the early Tom Baker years.

The BBC will not be deciding which company will win the co-production deal until December at the earliest, and with a three-month transition period necessary, the earliest **Doctor Who** would be back in production would be the end of 1990, with no new material available, after this December, until some time in 1991.

NEW HIATUS

The BBC intends to keep news of this new, unavoidable, hiatus quiet to avoid another outcry similar to that which followed **Doctor Who**'s cancellation in 1985, and the only hope fans have of seeing any **Doctor Who** on television in 1990 is for the BBC to screen a season of repeats.

There is also the possibility of Coast to Coast finally commencing production of the **Doctor Who** Movie, of which they have now purchased the buy-out rights, and releasing it before the end of next year. And with Sylvester McCoy now available next spring, he would be an obvious candidate for the lead rôle - as well as tying in with the show's return in 1991, for which he and Sophie Aldred are contracted to appear (the latter for eight episodes only).

The BBC are currently negotiating co-production of a brand new science fiction series which, should it go ahead, would fill the void left by **Doctor Who** next year.

TWENTY EPISODE SEASON ?

The prospect of **Doctor Who**'s new production process can only spell good news for the series, which desperately needs to be made with an enthusiastic and fresh approach and out of the hands of a company which openly defames it.

Unlike with a BBC staff production team, an independent production company simply can't afford to become blasé or complacent since they will need to ensure the programme is made to the best standards possible in order to maintain their hold on its co-production.

Furthermore, it is believed the BBC are actively considering commissioning 20-episode seasons in future, a logical move since they won't be providing the extra, costly, facilities necessary - one of the factors which led to 14 episode seasons - while at the same time grossing more income with sales abroad.

In all, despite a bleak 1990 ahead, the move should pay off with better-produced and, hopefully, longer seasons...

BRIEFLY...

JOHN NATHAN-TURNER is reportedly furious that unedited copies of episodes one and two of **Ghostlight** got into the hands of several well-known fans prior to transmission. A production crew member is thought to be responsible for circulating the tapes, which were minus music and effects.

Further to CT's recent headline piece titled 'BBC to Investigate Video Pirates', BBC Enterprises would like it known the story is pure fabrication. They do not run an "investigations unit" and neither are they clamping down on the fan video network.

TITAN's Talons of Weng-Chiang Scriptbook has been delayed at the printers and is rescheduled for the end of October. **The Daleks** Scriptbook has also been put back to the end of November.

As to the future, Titan had intended to release three books every autumn, or per season run as now, but with **Doctor Who** off the air during 1990 this schedule is likely to change.

DWAS has sacked Brian Robb as CT editor and replaced him with fan artist Andrew Martin. Adding to the exodus, secretary Emma Jeffrey and Julian Knott of merchandising have resigned.

TIMELORD '89 the major 1989 US convention in Columbus towards the end of September, didn't go exactly to plan, as billed guests - John Nathan-Turner and Gary Downie - didn't show up. A fax sent by JNT claimed they hadn't received airline tickets, although the convention organiser has a different version. We hope to have a full account of the event next month...

THE DAILY MAIL appears to agree with DWB's own sentiments regarding the line-up of programmes on Saturday evenings. In a piece headed "Why is Saturday Night so Boring?" on September 30th, Shaun Usher commented: "Well within living memory, pub gatherings thinned and electricity demand leaped at predictable points on Saturday evenings...**Doctor Who** exerted its unique spell, modestly-budgeted science fiction hooking youngsters and their parents alike...These days, however brave a face the TV manderins put on it, Saturday is a seven-stone weakling..."

JON PERTWEE (right, with Nina Myskow and Keith Chegwin) was a recent panellist on the satellite talent show, Sky Star Search.

Sylvester McCoy was on a recent Saturday Roadshow with his arch critic Nina Myskow.

FOLLOWING last month's news that W.H.Allen are considering publishing **Doctor Who** fiction once the TV novelisations dry up, editor Peter Darvill-Evans has asked us to stress they haven't yet received permission to proceed, only JNT's agreement in principle, and therefore would readers not, as yet, start sending in unsolicited manuscripts as W.H.Allen do not know yet what kind of stories, if any, they'll be looking for.

Peter has also asked us to print a plea to readers with extensive collections of non-BBC copyright photographs. The closure of the BBC's Photo Sales Department has left W.H.Allen without a reliable central source for photos to reproduce in their occasional hardback books. Charitable donations of prints and slides would be appreciated but W.H.Allen would pay for material depending on quality and uniqueness. If you can help write to Peter at W.H.Allen stating what material you can supply.

WHAT THE PAPERS SAID

THE FINANCIAL TIMES

Doctor Who returns to BBC1 at 7.35 tonight in a new adventure battling against warriors from another dimension. Sylvester McCoy's Doctor has still to win over most of this programme's dedicated fans of all ages, but Nicholas Courtney makes a welcome return as Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart to help in the fight against those aliens. Sophie Aldred continues as the Doctor's companion.

SYLVESTER ISN'T THE REAL McCOY

This doctor's in distress

I AM very worried about Dr Who. As he starts his 26th year of being chased down dreary BBC corridors by clanking extras from outer space he seems to have become a serious case for treatment.

Sylvester McCoy is the least distinguished Doctor so far. With his scruffy outfits and silly hat he looks like one of those seaside photographers with no film in his camera.

And wide-eyed Sophie Aldred, as his sidekick Ace, needs to expand her range of expressions from the current two — a catatonic stare and blind terror.

The latest tale was the usual tosh involving the Knights of the Round Table and nuclear convoys.

With two Range Rovers and a helicopter in the opening episode all the budget went on transport instead of the script.

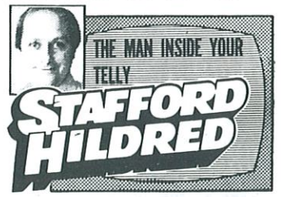
Rescue

The only hopeful sign is the race to the rescue by Brigadier Lethbridge Stewart, who zoomed out of retirement to help extricate McCoy from his usual unbelievable jam.

"Whenever the Doctor turns up all hell breaks loose," said the Brigadier, obviously referring to the show's good old days.

This time, lined up against Coronation Street in the schedules, it looks as though at last it could be the final adventure for the tedious Time Lord.

DAILY STAR, Saturday, September 9, 1989



THE INDEPENDENT

I was very worried to see a *real* helicopter used in the first episode of the 26th series of DR WHO (7.35 BBC1); surely they hadn't broken all the rules and gone big-budget on us? It was with relief that I then observed villains kitted out in reject costumes from *Willow*, and special effects created with a school chemistry set. The plot (a sub-*Sword In The Stone* affair) is also reassuringly creaky, so I don't think I'm giving away too much when I reveal that this instalment ends with the Doctor and Co confronted by a line of alien foot-soldiers commanded by the maniacal chief baddie to "Kill them now!" *JAMES RAMPTON*

Who's this Doctor? Your Ace has grown into a queen
PLAYING Dr Who's sidekick was other excitement and fame, but it left actress Sophie Aldred's more feminine aspirations trapped in a time warp.
Ace, the streetwise hockey she plays in the series (above), is not, it would seem, all the 19-year-old actress has to offer. Out of breather she is pictured (left) as a waitress to set the Dorkin opinionated.
Fed up with being cast as a tomboy, Sophie spent a day with a team of style experts... and even gave herself a shock soft and fair with. Is it really me? she asked. How many times have you said that, Sophie? Do you think I could be a model?
Because I have a very young, mischievous face, I'm always cast as a rough 'n' tumble teenager, I like playing tomboys, but I'm sick of clothes. Black make me better and pink frocks make me feel I have to hold my stomach in. But I'm glad now I did it. I'm going to go straight back to drama.'
Main picture by DAVID CRUMP

Daily Mail, Saturday, September 23, 1989

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letters

"P B S Stations are dropping like flies!"

Bruce Simpson, New York, USA (13-9-89)

In the US we get our dose of **Doctor Who** via regional Public Broadcasting Stations - the "poor man's" or eccentric man's answer to network broadcast fare. We don't have a TV 'tax' as you do; commercial stations make all their money in advertising - we pay when we buy the products. Commercial television in the US **usually** assumes that they are catering to a least-common-Neanderthal mentality among viewers. As a result, most promising programme ideas either never make it to broadcast, or are rendered 'forcibly retarded' after an interesting initial showing (i.e. - **Somthing is Out There**, which you'll be getting soon; trust me - don't get **too** far beyond the pilot). Notable exceptions (and there are **always** exceptions) have been **Star Trek**, and, to an extent, its successor.

PBS stations, however, cater to creativity and imagination, and struggle along with their often fickle following which spans the range of affluence (a fitting place for **Doctor Who**), they go after tax write-off subsidies from the business community and offer memberships to their viewers at a small cost in return for a programme guide subscription and various, optional, token premiums.

Pledging is voluntary, providing the programming is done entirely on trust, and only one in ten viewers ever makes the effort to become a member and contribute.

Since the early 80's, with the inception of PBS interest in the programme, **Doctor Who** fandom in the US has grown dramatically (though PBS stations have cited a recent levelling-off of fandom participation; many stations have even dropped the show). The **last** thing we in this country want to see is the cancellation of the show. Memberships in most local US fan clubs involves either a concurrent membership in the local **Who**-station or major, ongoing peer-group pressure to conform to the tenets of that persuasion. We gladly support the financial interests of whatever bureaucratic entity is responsible for the proliferation of the series, though we are a mite chagrined that the bulk of this support is rarely reflected through the BBC's efforts in the proportioning of monies taken in v. that which is actually spent on the show - more episodes, more stories, longer seasons, etc.

The BBC does indeed seem to feel that they are dragging around something that they would like to be rid of, and they don't and won't listen to the voices of the overseas hands that feed them. They charge PBS stations through the nose for **Doctor Who**, and, through their packaging deals, make it impossible for them to show what exists of the series from beginning to present without the station having to run all the Tom Baker episodes, alone, three or four times **each!** **Doctor Who** and **Blake's 7** are the two single-most expensive programmes a PBS station can acquire. Stations are dropping like flies!

...But they'll listen to **you!** The programme is made for the home market. We are incidental. We don't **mind** being incidental as long as we can watch the show (albeit, a year later). D W B is a good, political force in fandom. DWAS should get its act together and join forces with all the divergent interests in keeping the programme on the air, and making it better than it's ever been. I envy you the power to make another 25 years of **Doctor Who** a reality for **my** daughter to enjoy.

Danny Morano, New York, USA (11-9-89)

Robin Selby (ref:D W B#68) is the kind of person that sets international relations back a hundred years! Just where does he/she get off with the presumptious attitude towards us ? I'll have you know Bill And Ted's Excellent Adventure **went down in flames!!** It was precisely the opposite of your "limey" prediction that caused its demise. The instant the ads appeared, loyal **Doctor Who** fans pegged it as the shameless rip-off it was. Contrary to your misinformed mind, **Doctor Who** is well known and understood by most of my "Neanderthal America" as you put it. **Doctor Who** is seen on more stations, at more different times and by more people than you could ever possibly imagine!! Did Mr/Miss Selby used to write for The National Enquirer of Britain ? Does D W B stand for 'Dweeb' in England.

That aside, D W B is actually a very nice magazine with some interesting articles.

CRITICISM OVER "SYCOPHANCY" CLAIM

Richard Bignell, 'Proteus' Editor (13-9-89)

I think that you went a little too far in your editorial comment to Jonathan Burt's letter in D W B#69 concerning "...the appalling display of sycophancy JNT enjoys from DWM and the leading **Who** gloss-zines who receive cosy location invites in return".

Sycophancy, as you're probably aware, means imparting flattery to someone. Obviously I can't speak for The Frame as I'm not involved in the production of that magazine. However, my involvement in the editorial team of Private Who and Proteus at least allows me to answer from our quarter.

I would strongly disagree that Private Who Magazines are sycophantic towards JNT. We believe that you gain respect by showing it. John Nathan-Turner is a professional and it is his **job** to produce the programme. Whatever our personal feelings about his achievements, we aim to respect the position he has (the same as we do with **anyone** who is involved with the programme). If the fact that we decide to be objective in these matters (rather than strongly subjective as D W B is) yields us to be in attendance at various locations and studios during the making of the programme, then so much the better for our readership.

Let's appreciate the programme in friendship, not adversity!

Tom Salinsky, Middlesex (10-9-89)

I have been buying your rag for the past year or so for one reason and one reason only: you get **Who** news first. For this and your efficient monthly schedule you must be praised. However, here is where this letter must no longer be a sycophantic missive, dripping with superlatives. To add to your editorial crimes of arrogance, narrow-mindedness and unwillingness to accept any **Doctor Who** produced since 1983 (or in some cases 1976!) as even remotely worth watching must be added that of hubris.

I refer to the snide, pompous, self-important italicised comment at the end of Jonathan Burt's letter (D W B#69). It is totally beyond me how you can dismiss the DWM poll and elevate yours to the position of representing "most of fandom". Let's look at the evidence...

Total number of voters (DWM): 1,200
Total number of voters (D W B): 376

Not only this, but as I mentioned earlier, D W B is a very strongly opinionated magazine, and therefore, not surprisingly, it tends to be read by those who agree with its own views. Well, who'da believed that the series survey more or less exactly echoes its own feelings ? DWM's one great strength is that beyond a general optimism for the series as a whole (surely not a bad thing ?) it has **no opinions at all.** Hence its readers represent a true spread of opinion right across fandom. Also, since it is sold in newsagents, many times the number of fans buy it.

Gary Leigh is welcome to go on believing that his is the only magazine that **real Doctor Who** fans read and that the opinions reflected in what is genuinely the widest-read Whozine are little more than editorial book-cooking designed to pander to JNT, but the **truth** is that the **majority** of fandom do not actually agree with him, and that despite all efforts, D W B is still The Sun or Sunday Sport of the Whozine world.

John Hopper, Kent (30-8-89)

I must object to your use of phrases like "most of fandom...agrees with" and such like when really this refers to D W B's readership, and in this particular case (re:D W B#69) some 370 people. In spite of the cynicism of several letter writers towards DWM's poll, this did have some 1200 entrants - over three times as many as your own Series Survey. Many, though by no means all, may be less 'hardcore' than the majority of D W B's readers, though this does not mean that their collective opinion can just be dismissed! Nobody can really argue, either, that DWM is sycophantic towards JNT. For example, after Season 24, some of the critical letters they published even made those of certain of your correspondents seem mild by comparison!

Nevertheless your Series Survey results were a fascinating assembly of information as always, and showing again the vast spread of views, though some of Peter Linford's comments I strongly disagree with, particularly his dismissal of **Genesis of the Daleks** as the ultimate **Who** runaround.

ED: I can't let the above two letters go by without at least some justification of my use of the phrase "most of fandom...". As Mr.Salinsky correctly states, DWM is the only Who-related magazine licensed to be sold in newsagents. As it exists to make money for its parent company - Marvel - it can't limit itself to catering solely for fandom and so aims toward the mass market, a move which itself has alienated DWM from the more hardcore fans who prefer to subscribe to the more 'indepth' fan-produced publications. In short, then, fanzines are a product of fandom, unlike DWM which is a product of a commercial enterprise, and which is why we feel qualified to speak on fandom's behalf on the basis of the results from various of our polls.

SERIES SURVEY VIEWS

Jonathan Burnside, Cambridge (20-9-89)
The results of the **DWB** Classics and Clangers survey were interesting and surprising (issue #69). Your reviewer, Peter Linford, asks for suggestions.

Although there is no accounting for some people's taste, I think Mr.Linford's own theory - on "video boredom" - can be safely discounted. **Doctor Who** fans have a capacity for repetition rivalled only by the speaking clock. Most are happy to live in a kind of Chronic Hysteresis - mouthing the lines. I don't criticise this amazing ability - it has after all enabled the programme to get away with telling the same stories for twenty-six years. And I imagine that it can be fun - given that people like being told what they already know. But boredom ? Heresey!

Instead, I suggest that the explanation for your results lies in an allied affliction - video snobbery. It attacks those who became aware of the results of the **last DWB** survey - and, worried at finding that they liked the same things as everyone else, decided to vote for something different this time around. Particularly susceptible are those who think they are different from others - and since **Doctor Who** fans **are** genuinely different from others, it is really not surprising to see how the mighty have fallen.

It is gratifying, however, to see Season 24 do so well in the Clangers chart. These wonderful stories deserve our recognition, because far from being the Aunt Sally's of the **Whoniverse**, they alone are the keys to a fan's heart. Forget about the classics. Even ordinary television viewers can watch and enjoy those. But who other than a group of fans could spend an evening doubled over the antics of **Timelash, The Twin Dilemma** and those dear old **Warriors of the Deep** ? Pyrotechnics and special effects may fade away, but Dr.Warlock's colour-changing socks will always remain. Throw open your arms and welcome the clangers of the future. Dross is the touchstone of **Whosiness.**

Alister Bludula, Oxon (22-9-89)
Your Series Survey made me wonder whether you are slowly breeding a DWM-style following in a small section of your readers!

Firstly, shall we start with Favourite Writer (note that quite often you'll find me in agreement with Peter Linford in my comments), and the idiots that voted for Aaronovitch and Wyatt. If, after the abysmal **Remembrance of the Daleks** farce, people think that Ben Aaronovitch can compete with such giants as Whitaker and Co., then it is blatantly obvious that their knowledge (as obtained from actually seeing the stories) is limited to about the last twenty stories, since they seem to have missed out on **Doctor Who** when it was about plots, rather than over-used FX and diabolically tacky acting (McCoy and Aldred included). Therefore, since **Remembrance** had the kind of plot that George Lucas could dream up in under five seconds (actually a five-year-old kid could do better), I find it impossible to justify any votes for Aaronovitch. Similarly, Steven Wyatt (despite the Chief Clown) has little, or no, rating alongside the best **Who** writers.

Next up is Favourite Composer, and need I say more ? Incidental music in **Doctor Who** died with the advent of McCulloch, Glyn, Ayres and all this so-called talent who have sequencers shoved so far up the proverbial that it has seriously affected their ability to write anything which sounds any different from their previous effort.

It seems to me that votes were cast on a "Season 24 onwards is all I've seen, and wasn't that Dalek story really wicked" attitude, which I'm afraid is exactly how the DWM survey works.

Now let's have a look at the favourite stories for each Doctor. Sylvester McCoy unfortunately has nothing that deserves a vote, but if the narrow-minded "Sink Plunger and Egg Whisk" supporters club looked hard enough then **Greatest Show** should have won. Similarly Daleks did not provide Colin Baker's best story, but his stories were either quite good or completely awful so ordering them is difficult. Obviously I agree with the Davison number one, but his two and three are extremely dodgy (when will people stop voting for the monster, and start voting for the story ?). As for Tom Baker, there is nothing wrong with **The Talons of Weng-Chiang** (it is a damn good story), but it appears we have succumbed to the video-vote here since **Seeds of Doom** is quite simply **the** best Baker story, but unfortunately most of you will wait until BBC Enterprises do the video until you start voting for it. By the way, despite my obvious hatred for Dalek stories, **Genesis of the Daleks** deserves to be second place.

The Daemons for Jon Pertwee probably deserves to win, and Troughton's table is almost perfect, though **Tomb of the Cybermen** should be top, but as for Hartnell the idiot video-vote contingent vote for it just before it is released, but unfortunately **The Daleks** is not that good.

As for the Worst Doctors section, let's face it, Colin Baker is an excellent actor let down by some tacky scripting, but in comparison William Hartnell is an average actor with terrible support acting. The Hartnell stories are also distinctly weak in the characterisation department, with awful companions constantly popping up to ruin the stories. Sylvester McCoy has a good personality but is not **Doctor Who** material, infact Colin Baker stories seemed to be more like what you expect from **Doctor Who** than anything offered by McCoy's era, and to be quite honest, calling the current rubbish **"Doctor Who"** is an insult to the previous 23 years. So in my opinion the Best Doctor (or Worst Doctor reversed) should read (from the top) Tom Baker, Troughton, Pertwee, Davison and Colin Baker (roughly equal), Hartnell, McCoy. Note that this is based on the actor's portrayal, not the stories that he appeared in - which it seems is how everyone else decided their vote.

I think by now you'll have grasped the general statement that I'm presenting which is that surveys are always subjected to a bias with the older stories (and writers, composers, producers) being neglected in preference to the new rubbish, which is all some of the voters seem to think **Doctor Who** is. This causes vast injustice to the people who deserve votes, whilst complimenting the ones who are, quite simply, wrecking **Doctor Who.**

Bill Edmunds, New York, USA (12-9-89)
Talons of Weng-Chiang as the all time classic ? Gee, I wonder what caused its sudden surge in popularity ? Could it possibly be the same reason why **The Daleks** moved up to #3 and **Terror of the Zygons** moved up to #29 from #42 ? Fortunately all three of these stories will eventually follow the example of **The Evil of the Daleks** and settle down to a more realistic position (and yes, I **have** seen episode two of the latter). Certainly the aforementioned stories are classics, but the idea of **Talons** beating out **The Caves of Androzani** is, to me, a bit questionable. If **Caves** were put on video, it would **demolish** all competition in future surveys.

I thoroughly agree with Ronald McDevitt's views from **DWB#69**. It is a pity that most Hartnell fans seem unable to criticise the early stories. Where are legendary directors such as Rex Tucker (**The Gunfighters**) on the Worst Director category ? Conveniently forgotten in place of JNT's people. It's boring and predictable to label everything from the 60's as classic, and everything from the 80's as tripe. Many fans look back on episodes like **The Chase** with fond remembrance. They manage to overlook the atrocious acting and dialogue. Yet if this story were to have been made in the 80's, fans would show no mercy in ripping it apart. The point here is that every **Who** fan has a particular era which he or she regards as the **real Doctor Who.** For poeple who grew up with the black and white years, the modern stories must be disappointing, if only because they are so different from the 60's. On the other hand, for someone like me, whose first experience was the Davison series, the old episodes may hold no particular magic. It's all a matter of perspective.

How could 17% of the fans have voted for Sylvester McCoy as worst Doctor ? In the Readers Poll, only 8% expressed a dislike for Sylvester! So much for consistency. The Readers Poll showed the Seventh Doctor as being extremely popular, not so with the Series Survey. Asking people to list a best and worst Doctor is not going to achieve a true perspective on popularity. All it says is that a relatively small proportion think of McCoy as the "definitive" Doctor. This does not mean that the majority of fans don't like him. A better, and more valid, method would be to have fans list, in order, their three favourite Doctors. This would also do away with the petty and mean spirited category of Worst Doctor. I would be willing to bet that a major proportion of fans would rate Sylvester as one of their three favourites. Please consider this idea for the next survey - the results achieved would be a much more realistic reflection of popularity.

As an afterthought, what about excluding The Master from the Best Villains section ? The Master is always bound to win as best villain, giving the others no chance to prove their worth. Perhaps a new category could be invented: Best Master...

Dallas Jones, N.S.W. Australia (30-9-89)
The dominance of Robert Holmes as Favourite Writer means that the figures for the other writers in this category cannot be anaylsed because of the meagre number of votes left to distribute among them. An example: is Terrance Dicks(4%) really twice as popular as David Whitaker(2%) ? I think not.

Peter Linford suggested that Holmes be dropped from the next poll, but I feel a better suggestion for this and similar categories (particularly as they are covering the whole show and therefore many choices in most categories) is for there to be more than one answer to be allowed (i.e. 1st, 2nd and 3rd) which would provide a lot more information. Of course it wouldn't stop Holmes winning again by a huge margin, but the other results in the category would be more meaningful.

I also think the survey is a bit confusing in asking for a "favourite" and "least favourite" for each category. I know that **The Ark in Space** is one of my favourite stories, but I wouldn't say it is one of the best. Shouldn't the categories therefore be "best" and "worst" or "favourite" and "least favourite"?

Finally, I do feel the one-choice categories to not represent the true results because they are biased towards the Doctors from Pertwee onwards. It would be interesting to see the results for this section based solely on the 41 people who filled in the survey who have watched the show from the beginning - the **only** people, in other words, who can make a valid judgement based on **all** the evidence.
ED: All suggestions made concerning the tabulating of the Series Survey results will be considered for next time.

G.Hunt, Surrey (1-9-89)
I felt compelled to write to express my sheer disbelief at the exceptional quality of the artwork on the cover of **DWB#69.**

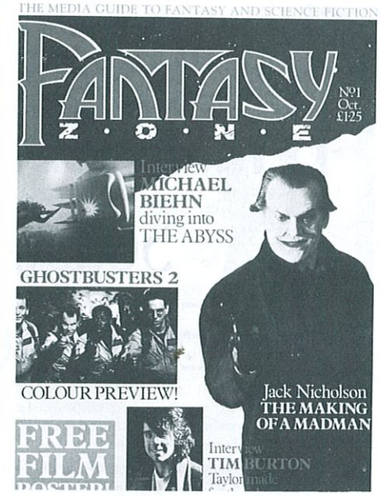
You have quite clearly discovered a fresh new talent of almost God-like proportion in Paul Redfearn! As Mr.Sin is amongst my favourite characters, I found this piece of art particularly pleasing.

LAST WORD...

Bryan Jenner, Alberta, Canada (7-9-89)
I really must protest to the comments made by T.Hedden in **DWB#69** (re: **The Tomorrow People**). There is a major difference between insulting a TV show and insulting a person. As I sit here watching Peter Davison dressed up in diapers and a cowboy hat, I cannot even begin to imagine how a person can defend this, "children's" programme or not. Even three year olds, which **The Tomorrow People** was clearly aimed at, would be hard-pressed to admit that their intelligence and gullibility were not being questioned. As for Dudley Simpson, his theme music for **TTP can** be easily repeated note for note because it's the same 5 notes in a sequence repeated 25 times over!

review

READERS of last month's DWB will recall a news item heralding the advent of two new fantasy-related pro-zines; one (Fantasy Zone) to be published by Marvel, the other (TV Zone) by Visual Imagination's Stephen Payne.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It could be argued that an attempt to compare the two is unfair, as they are not exactly covering the same ground - **TV Zone** describes itself as 'The Magazine of Cult Television' while **Fantasy Zone** rather more grandiosely calls itself 'The Media Guide to Fantasy and Science Fiction!' (yes, including exclamation mark!). The latter covers more or less the same subject matter as **Starburst**, which Marvel concede they foolishly sold to Visual Imagination, and which this new magazine - edited by former **DWM** assistant editor Louise Cassell - has been launched to replace. Nevertheless, since they will be fighting for largely the same readership, an assessment of each title upon its own merits seems an exercise worth engaging.

It is tempting to say simply that one is terrific while the other has been used as loo paper, but since I have been commissioned to fill two columns I will expand on my reasons for this judgement.

The gulf in quality is evident even from the covers. **Fantasy Zone** has a striking cover on which some thought and effort has clearly been expended, whereas **TV Zone** comprises a bland montage over a space backdrop with a quite revolting logo slapped on top. The two simply don't compare when placed side by side on W.H.Smiths' magazine rack. **TV Zone's** montage of Sylvester McCoy and the hideous new Enterprise from **Star Trek: The Next Generation** demonstrates admirably the severe limitations of its content. Of its 32 pages, 13 are devoted to **Doctor Who** and 9½ to **Star Trek.** It is claimed in the editorial that "research" has (surprise, surprise) revealed these to be the two most popular cult shows, in an attempt to justify its stifling format. One suspects a slightly different chain of events... A token piece on that all-time clanger **Space: 1999** and an utterly awful comic strip (which, incidentally, has a different title on the cover to that on the inside) make up the rest.

Fantasy Zone, on the other hand, has, as its subtitle implies, allowed itself a much wider scope, and provides contents well-divided between film (although the inclusion of Lethal Weapon II sits uncomfortably among the other features in a fantasy magazine), television, literature and a review of and competition to win tickets for the now defunct stage version of Metropolis (oops!).

Louise Cassell's magazine wins thumbs down on internal appearances too, with its neat, compact typeface and pleasing layout - miles more imaginative than **TV Zone's** churned out, desktop publishing look. The news that **DWM** is adopting a similar look should take it into its second decade with class. The only fault I would level is that its short review sequence is identical in format to Starburst's.

TV Zone's failings, though, are far more prolific. From the revolting-looking contents page and tatty block subject headings, to the preponderance of badly reproduced page-size photos (clearly inserted to cut down on the amount of text otherwise required), the whole thing has an amateurish feel and it seems Jan Vicent-Rudzki has learned little from his time as Stephen Payne's assistant.

On the writing front, though, things are quite satisfactory, although again drawing on the same old established names from fandom (don't be fooled by the pseudonyms!), where indeed many of **Fantasy Zone's** contributors stem, including Adrian Rigelsford which must lend a degree of scepticism towards at least some of its content.

VALUE FOR MONEY ?

From the value of money point of view at least, **Fantasy Zone** has to be the one to buy. Of its 40 pages, 15 are in colour, plus a "free" poster and far greater diversity of content. **TV Zone,** retailing at the same price (£1.25), has only 4 of its 36 pages in colour with inferior quality paper resulting in dull reproduction of photos.

But **TV Zone's** problems run far deeper than the merely cosmetic. The genre that it aims to cover simply is not one that lends itself to a commercial magazine, bi-monthly basis or not. It is neither specific enough to attract a readership such as **DWM's** (which has the advantage of a predominantly teenage and self-renewing audience), nor general enough to attract the wider and slightly older readership already buying **Starburst.**

In any case, what **TV Zone** is aiming to do is already being done better by **Time Screen** and our own **DWB** which, as fanzines, have lower readership targets and overheads and thus can afford to tackle such a specialized genre. An interesting sideline to this is that the title of **TV Zone** makes no mention of science fiction or fantasy, and there are many 'cult' shows that are not in the least bit fantastic. Will **TV Zone** be making forays, for example, into the worlds of **The Golden Girls** and **Prisoner Cell Block H** ?

The battle, therefore, is going to be between **Starburst** and **Fantasy Zone,** easily as good as the former which has, of late, appeared to have rested on its laurels and become rather staid due to its monopoly as Britain's only popular SF and fantasy magazine. **Fantasy Zone** is long overdue as competition and its first issue, certainly, should kick Stephen Payne and Co. back into shape... PETER LINFORD

The 30th Anniversary of THE TWILIGHT ZONE Season One Episode Guide

THIRTY-SIX episodes were screened during the first season of 'The Twilight Zone'. The pilot, Where Is Everybody?, had been made in February 1959 and launched the series the following October - exactly thirty years ago! As most of the 26 episodes (ref: DWB#69) were ready for transmission by that time, the broadcast order is radically different from production order. The first batch of 25 episodes were made during the period from June to November 1959. In February 1960, CBS announced the series would continue for the rest of the planned season and ten further episodes were made after that date. One episode, The Mighty Casey, having been held over from the first batch, was screened during the second half of the season.

w. - writer, **p.** - producer, **e.p.** - executive producer, **d.** - director, **d.p.** - director of photography (Unless otherwise stated: **w. Rod Sterling, p. Buck Houghton, e.p. Rod Sterling, d.p. George T. Clemens.** Numbers in brackets indicates production order, though note the current repeats on Channel 4 on Fridays nights are shown at random and in no particular order)

WHERE IS EVERYBODY? (1)

2/10/59, d. Robert Stevens, p. William Self, d.p. Joseph La Shell. A man finds himself alone in a small town, and panics...

ONE FOR THE ANGELS (6)

9/10/59, d. Robert Parrish. A sidewalk salesman (Ed Wynn, pictured) cheats death (Murray Hamilton), but now death must take someone else in his place.

Mr.DENTON ON DOOMSDAY (5)

16/10/59, d. Allen Reisner. A western town, the local drunk (Dan Duryea) is involved in a shootout with a bully (Martin Landau). Henry J.Fate (Malcolm Atterbury) gifts the drunk with the ability to disarm his opponent.

THE SIXTEEN-MILLIMETER SHRINE (15)

23/10/59, d. Mitchell Leisen. An ageing actress (Ida Lupino) continually rewatches her old films, but she cannot be coaxed into making a new one.

WALKING DISTANCE (4)

30/10/59, d. Robert Stevens. Martin Sloane (Gig Young), an advertising executive, is tired of life and wants only to return to the home of his youth. A confrontation with his past leaves him more than he bargained for.

ESCAPE CLAUSE (3)

6/11/59, d. Mitchell Leisen. A hypochondriac (David Wayne) makes a pact with the devil. Granted immortality, all he wants to do is die.

THE LONELY (2)

13/11/59, d. Jack Smight. A murderer (Jack Warden) isolated on a deserted planet falls in love, in desperation for companionship, with a robot (Jean Marsh).

TIME ENOUGH AT LAST (11)

20/11/59, d. John Brahm, Based on a short story by Lynn Venable. A short-sighted bank teller and bookworm (Burgess Meredith) spends his lunch hour reading in the bank vault and thereby survives a nuclear war. In the remains of the library, he finds paradise.

PERCHANCE TO DREAM (14)

27/11/59, w. Charles Beaumont, d. Robert Florey, Based on Beaumont's own short story. A man with a serious heart condition (Richard Conte) is being frightened to death in his dreams. He consults a psychiatrist and confronts his nemesis.

JUDGEMENT NIGHT (7)

4/12/59, d.John Brahm. On board a passenger ship, a German (Nehemiah Persoff) is convinced he suffers from dèjà vu and attempts to warn his fellow travellers of an impending attack by a U-boat. (Patrick MacNee makes an appearance as the First Officer).

AND WHEN THE SKY WAS OPENED (9)

11/12/59, d. Douglas Heyes, Based on Richard Metheson's short story Disappearing Act. The first space flight returns with three astronauts (Rod Taylor, Charles Aidman, James Hutton) but soon all traces of the flight vanish.

WHAT YOU NEED (22)

25/12/59, d. Alvin Ganzer, Based on the short story by Lewis Padgett (the pseudonym of Henry Kuttner and C.L.Moore). A salesman (Ernest Truex) sells a thug (Steve Cochran) a pair of scissors. They save his life when his tie is caught in a lift. The thug returns to the salesman for more, but this time he doesn't get such a bargain.

THE FOUR OF US ARE DYING (17)

1/1/60, d. John Brahm, Based on an unpublished story by George Clayton Johnson. Arch Hammer (Harry Townes) has the ability to cast his features into any likeness. He impersonates the rich and famous in order to get girls and money, but sometimes he has trouble convincing people he isn't who he appears to be.

THIRD FROM THE SUN (13)

8/1/60, d. Richard L. Bare, d.p. Harry Wild, Based on the Richard Matheson short story. A scientist (Fritz Weaver) and a pilot (Joe Maross) steal a spaceship in order to escape impending nuclear war.

I SHOT AN ARROW INTO THE AIR (21)

15/1/60, d. Stuart Rosenberg, Based on an idea by Medelon Champion. Something goes wrong with the first manned mission into space. Three astronauts survive on a barren, waterless asteroid. One turns to murder in order to survive.

THE HITCH-HIKER (10)

22/1/60, d. Alven Ganzer, Based on the radio play of the same name by Lucille Fletcher. A woman (Inger Stevens) is haunted by continual sightings of a hitch-hiker (Leonard Strong) that no one else can see.

THE FEVER (24)

29/1/60, d. Robert Florey. Flora Gibbs (Vivi Janiss) wins a trip to Las Vegas, where her husband becomes addicted to playing the one-armed bandits. The addiction turns fatal when he demands his money back.

THE LAST FLIGHT (8)

5/2/60, w. Richard Matheson, d. William Claxton. In the heat of battle a World War One pilot (Kenneth Haigh) deserts his fellow officer and friend. Transpoted through time, he learns he is to be given a second chance.

THE PURPLE TESTAMENT (18)

12/2/60, d. Richard L. Bare. Before battle, a soldier (William Reynolds) can tell when a man is about to die.

ELEGY (25)

19/2/60, w. Charles Beaumont, d. Douglas Heyes, Based on Beaumont's own short story. Three astronauts set down on an asteroid. It resembles Earth but the people are entirely motionless. This is a mausoleum where the dead are granted their final wish.

MIRROR IMAGE (26)

26/2/60, d. John Brahm. A woman (Vera Miles) is waiting to catch a bus, and everyone claims to have seen her just a few moments before. In a mirror she catches sight of her doppleganger.

THE MONSTERS ARE DUE ON MAPLE STREET (19)

4/3/60, d. Ron Winston. A meteor falls over Maple Street and is followed by a total power failure. A boy tells his neighbours aliens are taking over and paranoia ensues.

A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE (23)

11/3/60, w. Richard Matheson, d. Ted Post, d.p. Harkness Smith. A businessman, Arthur Curtiss (Howard Duff), is shocked to find his office is a set on a film production and the crew think he is Jerry Raigan, movie star and drunk. Curtiss is his character in the film. He searches for traces of his life as Curtiss and can find none.

LONG LIVE WALTER JAMESON (20)

18/3/60, w. Charles Beaumont, d. Anton Leader. Professor Walter Jameson (Kevin McCarthy) knows almost too much about history. His colleague, Professor Samuel Kittridge (Edgar Stehli), discovers the truth. Jameson is immortal, but his past is catching up with him.

PEOPLE ARE ALIKE ALL OVER (12)

25/3/60, d. Mitchell Leisen, Based on the short story Brothers Beyond The Void by Paul Fairman. The survivor of a crashed spaceship (Roddy McDowell) is accommodated in luxury by the Martians who rescue him.

EXECUTION (27)

1/4/60, d. David Orrick McDearmon, Based on George Clayton Johnson's unpublished story. Joe Caswell (Albert Salmi) is hung for murder in 1880, but at the moment of death he is transported to a modern laboratory by Professor Manion (Russell Johnson), inventor of a time machine.

THE BIG TALL WISH (28)

8/4/60, d. Ron Winston. A boy (Steven Perry, centre) wishes for Bolie Jackson, an over-the-hill boxer (Ivan Dixon, left) to win his comeback fight. Win he does, but embittered fighters like Jackson don't believe in magic (right: Kim Hamilton).

A NICE PLACE TO VISIT (29)

15/4/60, w. Charles Beaumont, d. John Brahm. A petty thief (Larry Blyden) is shot dead by the police. He wakes to find himself in the company of Pip (Sebastion Cabot), whom he assumes is his guardian angel. Everything is just a little too perfect in paradise.

NIGHTMARE AS A CHILD (30)

29/4/60, d. Alvin Ganzer. Schoolteacher Helen Foley (Janice Rule) meets a girl who is intent on reminding her of her mother's murder - an event Foley has blotted out of her memory.

A STOP AT WILLOUGHBY (31)

6/5/60, d. Robert Parrish. A severe case of insecurity leads Gart Williams (James Daly) to an idyllic place called Willoughby.

THE CHASER (32)

13/5/60, w. Robert Presnell Jr., d. Douglas Heyes, Based on the short story by John Collier. Roger Shackleforth (George Grizzard) is hopelessly in love, un requitted, with Leila (Patricia Barry). A love potion reverses the situation.

A PASSAGE FOR TRUMPET (33)

20/5/60, d. Don Medford. A musician (Jack Klugman, pictured) with a drink problem and no future attempts suicide. Reflecting that life isn't so bad after all, he is offered the choice between life and death.

Mr. BEVIS (34)

3/6/60, d. William Asher. The accident-prone James B. W. Bevis (Orson Bean) is given the chance to have a particularly bad day over again. But the price is too high.

THE AFTER HOURS (35)

10/6/60, d. Douglas Heyes. Marsha White (Anne Francis) is sold a gold thimble on the ninth floor of a department store. But there is no ninth floor in this particular store.

THE MIGHTY CASEY (16)

17/6/60, d. Robert Parrish and Alvin Ganzer. A burnt-out baseball team make it to the top thanks to the skills of robot Casey (Robert Sorrells). But nine men must make up the team, so Casey must be given a heart.

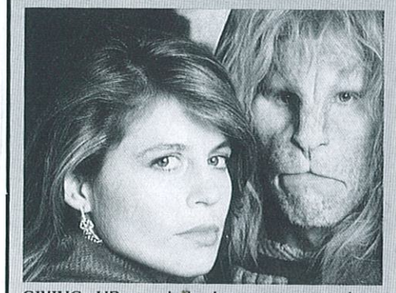
A WORLD OF HIS OWN (36)

1/7/60, w. Richard Matheson, d. Ralph Nelson. Victoria (Phyllis Kirk), one half of a playwriting partnership, finds her husband with an affectionate blonde. A moment later the other woman disappears. Her husband has a dictation machine which will create anything he describes to it. Including women.

EACH EPISODE DURATION: 20 minutes approx.

Compiled by SUSAN POLAN

OCTOBER REVIEW



GIVING UP a whole hour every week to watch 'Beauty and the Beast' is becoming a drag. This once noble series has been emasculated by LWT to enable them to screen it at 7.30 on Friday evenings.

At its best last season, it was hard-hitting drama with a rough edge and a conscience. This season it is sickly sweet drivel guaranteed a whimper a minute. The real reason for this is that any episode with the merest hint of a disturbing or, dare one say it, violent nature will not be screened. Not just cut, you understand, but totally ignored.

The pertinent question, of course, is what will happen to the unscreened episodes from this and last season. Rumour has it they will be scheduled in a later time slot (i.e. after nine o'clock), but realistically this is doubtful. What chance a quality series with high production values stands in the popularity stakes given such a forced schizophrenic reputation remains to be seen.

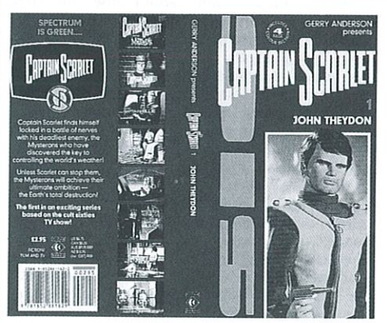
ESCAPIST ENTERTAINMENT

Giving up another half hour to watch **Doctor Who (Battlefield)** is the last straw. I would gladly swap all for the chance to watch re-runs of **Space Patrol** (Sky TV). Such are the depths of desperation that lead to the acquisition of a hi-tech dustbin lid, the better to capture satellite television broadcasts.

Space Patrol, together with Get Smart - that famous **Man From U.N.C.L.E.** pastiche - provide an hour's escapist entertainment every Saturday and Sunday lunchtime. **Space Patrol,** a space drama from the 1950's, pits Commander Corry and his sidekick Cadet Happy against an assortment of gothic villains and renegade aliens. Obviously inspired by comic heroes such as Dan Dare and Flash Gordon, **Space Patrol** must surely have provided the impetus for **Fireball XL5.**

Very, very similar to the corny old puppet series, especially in the effects (which are nevertheless brilliant for the time), **Space Patrol** is a pleasure to watch. When the actors cock up their lines dreadfully, which they are frequently wont to do, you just have to remember this was a live series and join in the fun. There's no knowing what will happen next!

SUSAN POLAN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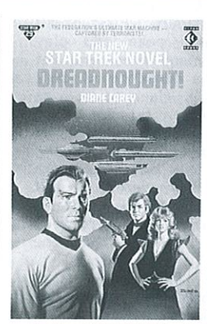
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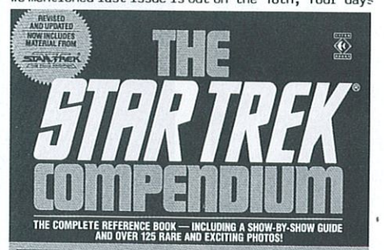
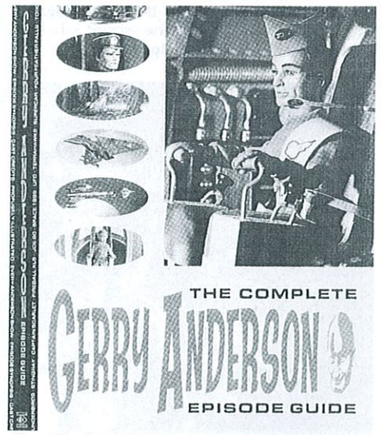
STAR TREK
THE NEXT GENERATION
A CALL TO DARKNESS

NOVEMBER TITAN RELEASES

NOVEMBER is an exceptionally busy month on the fantasy television book front for Titan. In addition to the standard 'Star Trek' releases (top right) out on the 14th, a revised edition of the 'Star Trek Compendium' is now available, now covering 'Star Trek - The Final Frontier' in addition to the other films, and there's an updated show by show guide to the series to boot! It has 184 pages and costs £8.95 (ISBN: 1 85286 221 1). On the Gerry Anderson front, the Captain Scarlet novel we mentioned last issue is out on the 18th, four days


REVISED AND UPDATED NOW INCLUDES MATERIAL FROM STAR TREK
THE STAR TREK COMPENDIUM
THE COMPLETE REFERENCE BOOK — INCLUDING A SHOW-BY-SHOW GUIDE AND OVER 125 RARE AND EXCITING PHOTOS!



after 'The Complete Gerry Anderson Episode Guide' is published at £8.99 (ISBN: 1 85286 216 5). Containing a comprehensive reference guide to every TV series ever created by the master of Supermarionation in over 160 pages - including many in full colour - and a foreword by Anderson himself, this will be a must for every fan!

MARK CONRAD APPEARS IN 'THE CURSE OF FENRIC', THE THIRD STORY IN THE LATEST 'DOCTOR WHO' SERIES, AND HE IS ALSO INVOLVED WITH THE 'STARWATCH' PROJECT. GARY LEIGH SPOKE TO HIM ABOUT HIS SF ROLES AT HIS CHELSEA HOME ON SEPTEMBER 23rd.

How did you get approached to be in 'Doctor Who'?

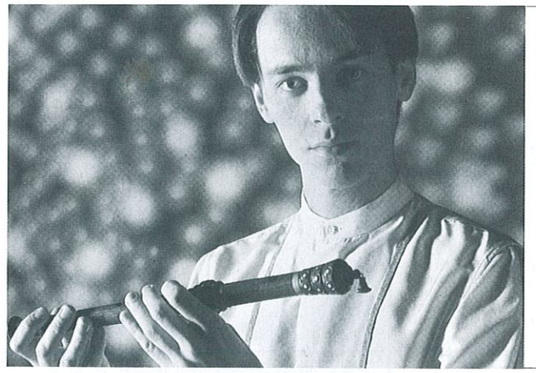
I am of Polish origin, and very often when there are any Slavic rôles - Russians, Poles, Czechs, etc. - as there are in **The Curse of Fenric**, it's sort of 'Round up the usual suspects.' I play one of the soldiers from Russia who come to England during the 2nd World War.

I was delighted to be offered the rôle because I remember I used to cower behind the settee watching **Doctor Who**, and it was a sort of childhood dream to actually be in it. I'm only in one episode, but it was still such good fun to do and the people were so nice. It's always nerve-racking going to a new job, but everybody really went out of their way to make you feel welcome, particularly Sylvester and Sophie.

How did filming go ?

I felt it went very well. I was wondering whether it would be approached with a degree of condescension being **Doctor Who**, but that was not the case at all. In fact, the stuff I was doing was really very, very hard. The script was very dark, and I had to be aware of evil around me and had to try to communicate that sort of unease which is very hard to do and then to actually be confronted by one of the nasty monsters was really difficult. First of all you want to stare and poke and play around with the mask, and then you get used to it. There is a sequence where I am being chased by a Haemavore, as they're called, which was a bit odd really because I wasn't really being chased by one at all - I was being chased by the camera and I had to look at the camera pretending it was a Haemavore, so that was even harder. I think the masks aren't bad, but the Haemavores are a very good idea because they're not all from one time...

As I said, it's a very dark story and as a script I think it worked very well, but I'm a bit worried about all this 'has it over-run or has it not' business, because Ian Briggs who wrote the script, I felt, wrote everything there for a reason, and everything we filmed was pretty concise so we'll just have to see what happens.



Name: Petar Andurrs
Birth Place: Hammerfest, Norway
Position: Mission Crew Operative
Status Code: Three-alpha-level four

RANGER

I was quite interested to read of the general slagging off Nicholas Mallett gets in **DWB**. There are two sides to a director - his personality and his work - and his personality is absolutely wonderful, he's a very nice guy to get on with. I found on the work side, in rehearsal, he was very helpful, but like on most things, once you're on location actors have to look after themselves a bit more and you're supposed to remember what you've done in rehearsal. It's fairly hard to judge when you're in something whether it's going to be good or not, but I think it is going to be very good and I think in future polls Nick might do a bit better.

The funniest thing about the location filming last April was that, throughout the shoot, it was that time when the weather just kept changing and they even had snow one day and bright sunshine the next. Sylvester even started putting in things like "Interesting weather we're having ?" because they were just tearing their hair out over the weather's continuity!

You're also involved with 'Starwatch' aren't you ?

That's right. I'll be playing a character called Peter Andurrs whose code name is Ranger and who is from Norway but educated in England. The nice thing about **Starwatch** is we've had conversations with the writers who are now trying to pick up on aspects of things we, as people, find important or aspects of our own personalities. In my case I get on with animals, particularly horses, so they're thinking of giving my character some kind of rapport or something with animals - making that a facet of my character - which is interesting. So I'm one of the people they've brought in to be a Mission Crew Operative in the **Starwatch** organisation.

Tomek Bork, who is also in 'The Curse of Fenric', is in 'Starwatch' too. How did that come about ?

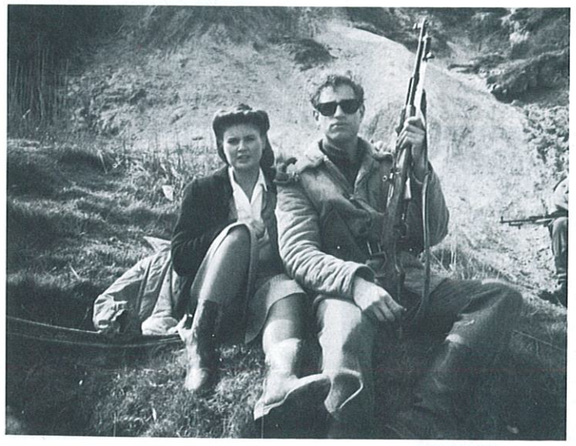
I'm not sure it was coincidence. I think it's a little to do with **Doctor Who** hoping to steal a bit of a march perhaps, because when **Starwatch** is made **Doctor Who** can then point out and say 'Oh well, we actually had these people a year ago', so I think they were quite interested in the fact we were doing **Starwatch.**

At the moment **Starwatch** is scheduled to enter production in summer 1990, as far as I know. I've met Jon Pertwee and he's an amazing guy and larger than life, not just on telly but physically as well - he's just enormous! He'd say something like 'Did you see the latest Simply Red concert, it was really good', and I'm going 'Simply Red ? A bit advanced for me'! It will be a great honour I suppose to work with someone like that.

Do you think 'Starwatch' has potential ?

Yes, obviously I hope it has. I think they need to focus their ideas a little more on the environmental and protection side of it, which could be strengthened, but as to the concept of the fantasy game-type side to it and the adventurous angle, as well as having high production values, I think it's got potential.

MARK CONRAD, THANK YOU VERY MUC



PHOTOS: (Top) Mark Conrad as Ranger in 'Starwatch' (photo:Tom Hutchings); (Below) Location photos from 'The Curse of Fenric' featuring Sophie Aldred relaxing with (left) Marek(Vershinin/The Destroyer)Anton and (right) Tomek(Sorin)Bork.

BATTLEFIELD

MORTE D' Arthur"

BATTLEFIELD was a story with a lot of potential. Unfortunately, most of it remained unfulfilled. There were two stories which it was not - one of them was 'Remembrance of the Daleks', the other one has never been made. The result was a production that promised more than it actually delivered.

The plot is straightforward enough. Perhaps too simple, in fact. But even so there are inconsistencies and a plethora of scenes that really have no purpose. The rôle of Elizabeth Rawlinson is a good example. She is blind, and in the sword and sorcery world of knight versus tank the blind are supposed to be imbued with a special form of second sight that does not rely on the physical eyes. But here, although it is hinted that she does indeed have some prescience - she can feel the existence of Excalibur - the extent of the magic is that she has her sight restored by Morgaine. Terrific for the character, but not terribly exciting or original in television terms.

In fact, the character of Elizabeth contributes nothing to the story other than to help delineate Morgaine's character. Or rather, to confuse the audience about what Morgaine's character is. She kills Lt.Lavel one moment, and restores Elizabeth's sight the next. Obviously very alien behaviour. The point presumably is that Morgaine is amoral rather than evil. A soldier who has no weapon capable of destroying her is fair game for the turned-to-dust treatment, but a civilian who does her son a favour (albeit without much choice) deserves one in return.

Most of the characters are ciphers. Only the Brigadiers, the Doctor and Ace, Morgaine and Mordred and good old Ancelyn have anything really to do or say. Ancelyn and Bambera - both supposedly warrior chiefs of a kind - come across as effete wimps. What character they do have soon falls into disuse: Bambera's catchphrase is only there for one rather obvious joke; after that it disappears - shame.

The regulars, though, are splendid. The Doctor, Ace and the real Brigadier are on top form. The only question mark over them at all is why the Brig is actually included. After all, he doesn't really do anything except fill in for other characters who got underwritten (or not written at all). He turns up to rescue the Doctor (very easy - and already it's episode three), gets zapped by the Destroyer, then zaps it back. It is only Courtney's fine and familiar performance that prevents the audience from wondering what on earth he's there for.

It is no bad thing to use characters and situations to help define the leading players or to explain the plot. But in **Battlefield** this is all most people seem to do. The Rawlinsons, Warmsly, Lavel, Zbrigniev and Husak do nothing else. The story would carry one quite happily without them. Apart from Warmsly and Elizabeth Rawlinson, there would be precious little loss. Indeed, when the whole pack of them are expelled from the story for episode four we don't miss them at all. Are Husak and Zbrigniev killed in the final battle ? Who cares ? Even Shou Yuing is there only to provide a foil for Ace. One begins to feel sorry for the Rawlinsons - trying to run a hotel and bar in an area where nobody else seems to live and with just one (unexplained) guest.

But a story like this has to take place in the open and away from most of civilisation. There are a limited number of knights, so the opposition must be limited also. Although once the set battle begins (and we never see its finalé, only the aftermath) UNIT seem to have no problem. Knights previously shown as impervious to just about anything are quickly vanquished.

Yet this is the raison d'etre of the story - knights apparently from the distant past attacking troops from the near future. Not that it is explained where the knights really come from, or why they are having their battle on Earth in the 1990's at all. But they are. And we know it is the 1990's because the roadsigns are marked in kilometres, the phones tell you when they're broken, and ordinary people can afford Range Rovers (unless they are young and by implication students, in which case they can only run to a 2CV).

In an action adventure story explanations of minor events and situations shouldn't matter too much. Aaronovitch's first script rattled on so fast that nobody cared that there were a few inconsistencies and things went unexplained. Similarly in **Battlefield**, it shouldn't really matter whether the Doctor was expecting the Destroyer and knew he'd need some silver bullets, or whether he was teasing the Brigadier when he suggested them. We don't care that the UNIT armourer is (as Banbera would say) so shame-hot that he can take time out from preparing for battling knights within armour to run up some new bullets with a lump of silver he had lying around. We don't cringe when Ace happens to have those bullets just when the Destroyer turns up - and gosh, he can be killed with them!

But not all of the story is so fast and furious that things pass us by like that. Even the youngest viewers will be a little surprised that the alien witch with magic powers is going to be locked up at the end of the story. Not for very long, one assumes, particularly since teleportation is one of her lesser tricks.

But for all of this, **Battlefield** is an enjoyable story with much to recommend it. The juxtaposition of knights and technology is interesting - though hardly original. It does begin to pall after a while, though. It's fine for an interlude (as in **The Time Monster**, for example), but the effect soon wears off.

More interesting is the whole concept of honour as seen and practised by Morgaine and Mordred. But even here an opportunity - to compare the different forms of military honour practised by Morgaine and Lethbridge-Stewart - is missed.

On the production side, there is little to fault. The pace could be quicker, but this is the scripting rather than the editing. In fact the editing is largely very good - the cuts between locations as Mordred summons his mother, for instance. The sequence towards the end of part one as Ace and Shou Yuing discuss school explosives lessons makes one cringe, but not because of the obvious edit-points, more because of the naive way the editing is predicted by a script that is trying to be just too clever.

The showpiece from a production standpoint has to be the Destroyer. He is a masterpiece of make-up, costume and effects. Well lit, well shot, and musically impressive, he has only two flaws. One is that he appears at the end of episode three - the flagging story needed something earlier - and is killed mid-way through part four (rather easily, as it turns out) so we get little chance to appreciate the monster.

The other problem is that the Destroyer is **too** impressive. He is about to destroy the world, and there is no doubt that he can. But as the fires blaze and the world around him begins to explode, the Destroyer seems uninvolved. He has only to be there for chaos to set in. Much more interesting visually would be to have him involved in it - hurling lightning bolts about and the like. As it is there is no visual connection between cause and effect - he is just there while it happens.

The main problem with **Battlefield** is quite simple. It is wholly dependent upon a much grander and more interesting and exciting story - which we have not seen. We get lots of hype about it, and loads of time to think about it. Indeed, it is much more firmly based on the legends we all know and which we thought **Battlefield** would draw on so heavily. That is the story we all want to be watching - not the rather tame after-effects.

Other stories have been aftermaths of fictional events on a grand scale - **The Brain of Morbius** is a prime example. But there we knew just enough to understand, and not so much we wanted to see that story instead.

Of course, it would have been easy to fix. Rather than worry about the Doctor leaving notes for himself (interfering in his own past in an unforgiveable way), Arthur should have risen and done huge and horrible battle with Morgaine. As it is, she threatens to set off the nuclear missile (why else would it be there ? Predictable, or what ?). The Doctor of course dissuades her - after all, it's totally dishonourable to destroy the world in a nuclear holocaust; although releasing the Bringer of Darkness or whatever to do it is apparently okay.

The final verdict, then ? **Battlefield** was fun, if a little slow. Great to watch, but difficult to feel involved with. Promised a show-down between Arthur and Morgaine with magic, swordplay and everything - and delivered, well, just another missile. Good as far as it went, in effect. Let's hope the rest of the stories in this season have the guts and imagination to go just a bit further.

JUSTIN RICHARDS

YOUR VIEW

CLINTON LAKIN: "Time and Time Lord wait for no-one..." but I wonder how long before our dear Doctor's predisposed knowledge of every situation he seems to be faced with begins to annoy viewers as much as the irritating comic touches Messrs.Nathan-Turner and Cartmel like to instil upon us ? This was, for me, the only factor which came close to spoiling **Battlefield**, which I felt was possibly the best story since **Caves of Androzani**. So, the (then) current production team can come up with a minor classic without a single Dalek in sight, and actors not hamming it up but delivering wonderfully characterised performances when they want to - but do we need a Doctor who faces every horror with a disturbing smugness and 'know it all' quality which I wager he could have done without in defeating Morgaine ? I had feared the pace of the story would flag a little after episode one, but the remaining three episodes accelerated into overdrive, by part four producing one of the single most exciting episodes of the 80's.

SIMON O'CONNOR: I can honestly say that **Doctor Who** is, once again, what it should be - gothic drama with original, witty scripts and tense, pacey direction. Jean Marsh and Nicholas Courtney are back on top form, bringing two wonderful characters brilliantly to life. My only complaint is that Ace's lines are still those of a child, making Sophie's character far from realistic. This story could do well, but with its early autumn time-slot opposite Coronation Street, and the minimal publicity the BBC have given it, success seems unlikely.

LYN DAVIES: I am really impressed. Mystery has returned to the show as the Doctor is accused of being Merlin from another dimension. Sylvester McCoy himself is becoming far more mysterious as the Doctor, and the new revelations that he is, was or will become Merlin in a future incarnation can only add to the sense of discovery about a Time Lord who hitherto had lost his air of mystery.

DOMINIC BRITTON: A thousand thanks to Mr.Aaronovitch! For the first time in almost twenty years - since Season 7, in fact - credibility has been restored to UNIT, and dignity to Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart. Nicholas Courtney obviously enjoyed the revitalisation of the Brig as much as the character himself enjoyed his return to the front line. It was a positive joy to see the brisk, lively-minded and resourceful Lethbridge-Stewart proving that military intelligence is **not** a contradiction in terms. **Battlefield** was certainly, to my mind, his finest hour. It was good also to note that the UNIT squad which the two Brigadiers led was not only unprecedentedly representative of the United Nations of its title, but also, at last, suitably armed for engagements with aliens and effective in battle. Ben A's storytelling technique, with its reliance on speed and diversity, is unsophisticated but effective.

EDWARD JOLLEY: Well, Ben Aaronovitch seems to enjoy stories with a message - anti-racism last year and this time anti-nuclear. My major complaints are Keff McCulloch's cacophony and the appallingly edited bit in episode one where a grenade goes off and Ancelyn springs into the air **three** times. The climax was also somewhat weak, and the silver bullets were as blatantly pointed out as the crystallized sugar in **The Happiness Patrol**.

DEREK GRAY: Season 26 has started well, though with not the same impact as last year. Strange, really, as **Battlefield** had all the elements of a classic story. One aspect I'm not really happy about is the reference that the Doctor might just be Merlin. What other mythical figures might he have been ? "Doctor, are you Nostrodamus ?" "Doctor, are you God ?" It could get a bit daft.

ROBERT J. WILLIAMSON: I'm not entirely sure **what** I think. On one hand I look back on it as a brilliant piece of television entertainment with some very memorable moments. But, was I the only person to find it a bit confusing ? I would have liked a few quieter moments when plot points could have been better explained to mere mortals infront of the screen. Nevertheless I can only thank the production team, writer and actors for such moments as the scenes between Doris and the Brigadier, and the incredibly tense climax to the end of episode two. The direction was less sloppy than Morgan's and the Destroyer was perhaps the best monster ever.

ROBERT GAIREY: I find it very hard to judge **Battlefield** as a story as such owing to the fact that it did not really have a plot to speak of. The episodes made a glorious spectacle and were technically impressive, but, when the layers of action are peeled away, there is definitely something lacking. Where were the explanations, for example ? Even by the end of the story we did not really know who Morgaine and her hordes were, where they had come from, why they had come to this world, or what the connection was between the Doctor and Merlin. And who, exactly, was the Destroyer ? How did he come to be imprisoned ? Why was he so enfeebled by silver ? Even the most mediocre Pertwee stories, like **The Time Monster**, made some attempt at plot explanation, but here everything was left completely up in the air and I could not help feeling frustrated. I know that Cartmel wanted to introduce more mystery into the programme, but surely this is going too far! Magic, a concept so seriously examined and challenged in stories like **The Daemons**, seems to have been used unconvincingly here as a device to cover up the shortcomings in the plot.

JOHN ROSS: A superb example of **Doctor Who**'s shortcomings as once again the audience is subjected to a catalogue of confused and unresolved plot elements.

* STAR * RATINGS	*
SCRIPT	***½
ORIGINALITY	***
DIRECTION	***½
ACTING	**½
SETS	***
COSTUMES	***
MONSTER	****
SPECIAL EFFECTS	****½
MUSIC	*½
OVERALL STORY	***
TOTAL = 63%	

PRESS REVIEWS

THE STAGE and TELEVISION TODAY

A COUPLE of years ago, *The Stage and Television Today* covered the story of the attempt by certain Corporation bigwigs to axe Doctor Who. The outrage provoked by this was considerable; "Save The Doctor" pressure groups sprang up in the most unlikely of places. The Doctor was, they said, a living institution, cherished by successive generations of youngsters. The bowls of protest paid off, for here is a new series of Doctor Who adventures.

The Doctor, played by Sylvester McCoy, follows the pattern of the last three, ie he is a charming, slightly eccentric old buffer who doesn't seem capable of fusing a dalek. And, this, I think, is the problem with the eighties version of the TimeLord's wandering. It's too soft.

In the early seventies, when Jon Pertwee played the Doctor, he was a cool customer, a sort of Dark Angel in frills and you could always guarantee an imaginative script and a hideous villain. Does anyone remember the Doctor tangling with a demon, conjured up by black magic devotees? Then, there was the mysterious life-force which brought plastic objects to life (pretty terrifying to a six year old) and then, of course, there were those four foot long slugs whose slime left victims screaming in agony.

Today, Doctor Who is wholesome. His enemies seem to be largely humanoid – that way you don't have a splash out on special effects, but instead merely rustle up something in wardrobe.

The new series kicked off with a sort of King Arthur story. In this, the knights of the round table materialise in more-or-less modern Britain, possibly to heed the call of a nation in need, although this is not clear, nor is the reason why the knights are armed with broad sword and laser-gun. Although the Doctor did mutter something about wars being waged in parallel dimensions of time.

The Doctor is ably aided by his assistant "Ace" – played by Sophie Aldred, who is a lot trendier than the assistants of old, and she loves explosives, which can't be bad. But on the whole I find Doctor Who a bit much these days. It's been given a 7.30pm slot but will have most appeal to the very young. What it needs is to grow up a bit. Forget spending on sets and costumes. All the Doctor needs is a good script and more blood and gore.

Nicolas Davies

EVENING STANDARD

REVIEW

JACI STEPHEN

A doctor who knows too much

DOCTOR Who (BBC 1) loses a lot in transportation. In the days when he battled with daleks and cibermen, you at least felt that the baddies stood something of a chance. Now, faced with an opposition as ineffectual as the England cricket team, you wonder why he bothers to get out of bed in the morning.

Battlefield was the last episode in the current yarn, in which the doctor (Sylvester McCoy) has been braving the antics of some very strange knights.

Central to the plot was Morgaine (Jean Marsh), mother of Mordred (Christopher Bowen) and intimate friend of The Destroyer (Marek Anton), her pet demon.

"What does he want the world for?" asked Ace (Sophie Aldred), the doctor's assistant.

"Why, to devour it, what else?" said Morgaine.

The pet, at this point, salivated a great deal and, when released by Morgaine, began to rip off his C & A wetsuit and perform a striptease, an act hardly in keeping with a character well versed in phrases like "The way of all flesh".

But then everyone in Doctor Who appears to have greater verbal skills these days. Mordred spoke to his mother in dialogue that was worthy of Prince Hamlet.

"In spite of thee, false parent," he announced at one point—a speech of considerably more finesse than any spoken by Ace, whose greatest contribution was "You scumbag!"

In the middle of all this talk of Excalibur, Arthur and demons, was Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart (Nicholas Courtney).

"Get off my world!" he yelled, pointing a gun at the pet demon. The demon refused. Jolly bad show, old chap.

Meanwhile, the doctor was trying to prevent Morgaine from blowing up the world with a nuclear bomb (Ah, yes. I forgot to mention the nearby army base).

"Too late!" cried Morgaine.

"Not while there's an abort button," said the doctor. Lucky there's one on our TV sets, too.

special feature

WITH SEASON 26 OF 'DOCTOR WHO' OPENING WITH THE LOWEST-RECORDED EPISODE IN THE SERIES' HISTORY, D W B HAS UNCOVERED INFORMATION THAT SHOWS THE B B C TAKES A FAR MORE ACTIVE INTEREST IN ITS AUDIENCE THAN WE MIGHT HAVE BELIEVED. FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS, THE B B C's AUDIENCE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN ASKING ITS PANEL MEMBERS (WHO NUMBER APPROXIMATELY 3,000) WHAT THEY THINK OF VARIOUS B B C PROGRAMMES, INCLUDING 'DOCTOR WHO', A COPY OF WHICH THEY HAVE KINDLY SUPPLIED TO OUR RATINGS COMMENTATOR GORDON McALLISTER AND ARE PUBLISHED BELOW TOGETHER WITH HIS OBSERVATIONS...

FIRSTLY, and most importantly, did the panel enjoy the programme ?

"Yes" seems to be the general concensus with, perhaps surprisingly, **Mindwarp** clearly coming out on top (as it does in all its categories), with **Paradise Towers** and **The Happiness Patrol** the least popular, generally mirroring fandom's own view, though it is interesting to note how badly **Greatest Show in the Galaxy** was received by the public considering its high esteem with most of fandom.

Colin Baker got off to a very poor with the panel at the start of Season 22, probably because they still recalled his only previous story up to then, but after that his Doctor enjoyed consistently high ratings which have even yet to be bettered by Sylvester McCoy. One wonders whether Michael Grade consulted these figures before deciding to give Colin the boot in 1986 ?

Peri was also generally well received, going out in a blaze of well-earned glory in **Mindwarp**, only to be replaced by the abysmal Mel Bush whose rating would surely have plummeted to zero had Bonnie Langford agreed to stay for Season 25 (note the B B C even has a sense of humour over the affair!).

Thank goodness for Sophie Aldred's Ace who is accelerating in popularity all the time and has proved to be a sure-fire hit with the public and fans alike, and is destined to go further this season.

The storyline is another very important factor and for the first time we can see how the public would have voted in the season polls. Again **Mindwarp** comes out on top, with **Remembrance of the Daleks** and **Silver Nemesis** closely behind with identical scores (perhaps reflecting the fact that the public couldn't tell the two stories apart ?). It seems the public went along with the fans' outcry over the quality of Season 24 with all categories giving it markedly lower than average scores, though it is unfortunate that Sylvester McCoy's Doctor has suffered so as a result. Since then his popularity has climbed significantly and will do so further this year. However, the worrying fact is brought home, as the survey highlights, that **Doctor Who** has not been produced to a consistent standard over the past four seasons, indicative of the B B C's recent shabby treatment of the series since its cancellation in 1985.

The question regarding the show's timing is very revealing. Saturday evenings were clearly very popular with the public, so what did the B B C do ? They rescheduled the programme to Monday evenings! This was not at all well received, though the move to Wednesday met with more approval (or rather, a more resigned acceptance), but still below the Saturday figure.

At the end of every series the panel is asked the most important question of all: "Would you like a further series ?" Apart from after Sylvester McCoy's disastrous debut season, the answer has always been, thankfully, more for than against.

With sex and violence on television again an important social issue, the B B C have recently taken to questioning the panel with regard to the latter (presumably the question of sex in **Doctor Who** doesn't come into it!). Generally all seems well, though it would have been interesting to have seen how Season 22 would have fared, and how **The Happiness Patrol** polled more than **Remembrance of the Daleks** in the violence stakes is a mystery to me.

Finally, at the end of last season viewers were asked to rate the baddies and, surprise, surprise, those 60's favourites easily came out on top, with the Daleks significantly ahead of the 80's Cybermen (not that they had much in the way of opposition!).

Overall, then, the survey presents some optimism after a very poor all-round performance in 1987, and despite the slow start to Season 26 it is hoped this rate of improvement in the eyes of the public continues.

GORDON McALLISTER

*PLEASE NOTE: Not all stories broadcast since 1985 were included in the survey

(All figures are percentages)	1984 OVERALL	ATTACK OF THE CYBERMEN	VENGEANCE ON VAROS	THE TWO DOCTORS	TIMELASH	REVELATION OF THE DALEKS	1985 OVERALL	MINDWARP	1986 OVERALL	TIME AND THE RANI	PARADISE TOWERS	DELTA AND THE BANNERMEN	1987 OVERALL	REMEMBRANCE OF THE DALEKS	THE HAPPINESS PATROL	SILVER NEMESIS	GREATEST SHOW IN THE GALAXY	1988/89 OVERALL
Entertaining	63	67	67	66	67	68	65	76	64	59	57	61	56	65	56	66	57	-
Boring	31	26	29	25	35													
Liked Colin Baker's Doctor	54	70	66	65	69	67	62	74	66									
Peri well played	-	62	65	61	64	63	59	71	67									
Good storyline	59	61	61	60	62	62	59	66	56	51	50	52	41	65	49	65	54	-
Melanie well played									47	41	42	39	34					
Liked Sylvester McCoy's portrayal										44	50	54	46	58	61	63	63	-
Timing of show OK	-	69	67	68	67	69	58	-	-	53	55	55	53	62	60	62	62	-
Ace well played													52	58	62	66	66	-
Wish Bonnie Langford had been eaten in 'Paradise Towers'											65							
Like a further series (yes)	55						56	—	59				46					57
LIke a further series (no)	16						19	—	17				28					15
No strong opinion	28						25	—	24				25					26
Show too violent														25	26	25	31	-
Liked the Daleks																		71
Liked the Cybermen																		65
Liked the Kandyman																		45
Liked the Pipemen																		45
Liked Fifi																		46

interview

LOUISE JAMESON

SOON TO BE APPEARING IN HER LAST SEASON OF 'BERGERAC' ON BBC1, LOUISE JAMESON RECENTLY TOOK A BREAK DURING ITS RECORDING TO SPEAK TO SIMON O'CONNOR ABOUT HER VARIED ACTING CAREER...

When did you first decide to pursue an acting career ?

When I was four years old! I played Little Miss Muffet at nursery school and I just loved the audience reaction, and I thought this is obviously where I'm going to spend the rest of my life.

My mother was a very keen amateur - the Tchaikovsky of the local amateur dramatics - and an excellent actress. She did one Scotch Porridge Oats advert, and then the war came and at that time women generally felt they couldn't be a mother and a career woman as well, so she opted for being a mum.

Did you ever watch 'Doctor Who' before you joined ?

Yes, it started when I was twelve, and I was a great Daleks watcher!

I got the part of Leela when the then producer, Philip Hinchcliffe, interviewed sixty girls for it, then that got whittled down to ten, then five, then three, and then finally me. But it was actually the director, Pennant Roberts, who gave it to me because, he said, I made him work. They asked Tom Baker to be at the interview, but he declined and said he'd rather let the director and producer decide. Pennant said that when I read the lines he felt he absolutely **had** to respond, which is why he decided to give it to me. The audition was based on one of my first scenes as Leela, which was basically running away from the Doctor, and saying "My name's Leela".

Was it difficult taking over from Elisabeth Sladen who'd been the companion for the previous three-and-a-half years ?

No it wasn't, simply because (very wisely, I think) they decided to go for an entirely different character. I think it would have been impossible to emulate what Lis had done - she did it so well that it would have been impossible to try to recreate that. I think they were dead right in trying to go for someone with a lot more aggression, a lot more independence, and a completely different costume!

I saw Leela as a mixture of naivity, innocence and untrained energy. I based her on the little girl that lived upstairs, who was then three and must now be thirteen or fourteen, and my then dog called Bozey, who was pure instinct and uneducated intelligence. I think the great danger was to portray her as stupid. Just because someone is uneducated doesn't mean they're stupid, so I tried very hard to play her as intelligent.

What were your two producers like to work with ?

They were both very good for very different reasons. Philip's very cool. He's that kind of man who never puts his arms in his jacket - it's always slung around his shoulders. He's slightly distant, but very efficient, and a very intelligent man. Graham works far more from the ground floor himself. He's always very much more accessible, though maybe he didn't carry the same amount of weight with people that were above him. So they were both very good in their own different ways.

As for the stories I had to work with, I particularly liked **The Sunmakers** because it had political content, and I think to be able to get some kind of message across in a very entertaining format is part and parcel of what we should be responsible for. The one I hated was the one set in a lighthouse because that was actually written for Lis Sladen, so I had a lot of trouble correlating the script with the character I'd already set up. **The Talons of Weng-Chiang** is my second favourite again by Robert Holmes who I think is by far the best writer.

Did you have any say in the scripts and the way your character developed ?

Not really. I was forever scratching out the parenthesis directions - Leela screams, Leela gets scared, Leela trips over and sprains her ankle - so I would insist Leela does not do these things, Leela would draw a knife instead!

It is often said that Tom Baker can be difficult to work with.

Yes, I would second that. I think he's one of the most extraordinary actors I've ever worked with, really extraordinary, though dedicated to the series. He also does a tremendous amount of charity work, which he never uses for his own personal publicity. But having said all that he can be temperamental and really rather bolshy and make life rather difficult if he wants to for people around him. He's a very odd mixture.

Did you used to perform your own stunts ?

When I got the script for **The Talons of Weng-Chiang**, it said "Leela jumps onto the table, somersaults over the door, crashes through the window and lands ten feet on the earth beneath", and I actually phoned the producer and I said **"No she doesn't!"**

Do you recall any particularly embarrassing moments ?

I remember one time when Tom and I were being filmed walking down a corridor, and suddenly he stopped and said "Leela ?" and I thought What's he going to do now?, and he said "Would you get off my scarf please ?" I'd been standing on his six foot trail of scarf! There was another time when we'd been filming on the roof of a cigarette factory in Bristol for **The Sunmakers**, and I was so cold when I came off the set and my fingers were completely white because I only had that leather leotard on. I was asked to sign autographs, and I'm sure it seemed as though I was being bolshy but I actually could not move my fingers!

Do you keep any momentos from your time with the series ?

I stole one of my leotards! And when I left, they gave me a really rather beautiful knife with 'Leela' inscribed on it with the dates that I worked on the programme, just as a farewell present.

Mind you, I think I was written out **appallingly**! The BBC's way of getting rid of a woman - to make her fall in love - is just so unimaginative, boring and totally sexist! Graham Williams wanted me to stay for Season 16, and right up until the day we went into the studio he was pleading "I can rewrite the ending - all you've got to do is just change your mind and we'll have you rushing into the TARDIS...", so that's why I think it was badly written. I could have died saving the Doctor's life or something - there's a **million** ways it could have been done better.

I left because I'd done two years of **Doctor Who** and there are only so many ways you can say "What is it, Doctor ?", and you run out of interpretations. The script can be very frustrating. Also I just love theatre and I'd been offered a part in The Merchant Of Venice.

Were you afraid of becoming typecast ?

Not really. People asked me that after I left **Doctor Who,** but there aren't that many savages from other planets! Those parts don't come by too often. I think this character I'm doing now in Bergerac has the most danger of being typecast. In a way it's the most 'normal' type of person that I've played.

Have you followed 'Doctor Who' at all since you left ?

Occasionally, yes. Colin Baker's a friend of mine so I caught quite a lot of his episodes, and my children are just coming up to **Doctor Who** age so no doubt I'll get hooked on it again!

Were you approached to appear in 'The Five Doctors' in 1983 ?

No, I wasn't, and I'm not quite sure of the reasons behind it. John Nathan-Turner did ask me to come back for a series - to do the overlap from Tom Baker to Peter Davison - and I said that I'd go back for a story or two, but not for a season, so I don't know if he was a bit miffed by that... I'd love to do a special, though, but just the one - I wouldn't go back for a season.

What did you do when you left the series ?

I went straight to the Old Vic to do Porscha, and then I did a series called The Omega Factor, which had the same producer as Bergerac has now. If I could be granted one wish, it would be to do a film of a book called The Bone People, which is about child abuse and trying to understand the problems. As I said earlier, I feel it's very important to do socially aware work. It would also be quite nice to get to grips with some good dramatic theatre.

What do you get up to in your spare time ?

I do a lot of keep-fit - I try to work out every day. I'm a mother with two children so that takes up a lot of my spare time. I also do a bit of writing, and I'm learning to play the guitar.

Would you consider writing a Leela novel ?

I don't think I'm talented to write a whole book. I've written several articles, but I don't think there's enough material there for a good book. I'm more interested in writing children's stories or scripts.

Do you still do conventions ?

I've done quite a few, but the bubble seems to have gone out of the market as far as I'm concerned. It's finding time that's the trouble, but yes, I do do conventions, especially if there's a good charitable cause.

LOUISE JAMESON, THANKS VERY MUCH

THE ENEMY WITHIN

ANYONE who thought that the BBC's science fiction output was in safer hands once Michael Grade had gone to Channel 4 had their hopes shattered recently by his successor Jonathan Powell. Indeed, we must now face the fact that Grade might have been only a part of the problem.

Powell's comments came at a recent "It's Your B B C" farce. Quizzed about the B B C aquiring **Star Trek - The Next Generation,** Powell retorted that he had "seen it", that it was **"terrible",** and that it **"might"** pop up on B B C 2. He also repeated the Holy Mantra: "Science-fiction-is-not-popular".

Fair enough...until it emerged that Powell had not actually **seen** a **complete** episode - he'd only seen "a bit" of the pilot.

What, one is forced to ask, is Powell's idea of "a bit"? A minute ? Two ? Dr.McCoy's show-stopping cameo (essentially an in-joke for regular **Trek** viewers, which I think we can assume doesn't include Powell) ? The breathtaking saucer detachment ? The moving conclusion ? Or did he just get as far as "Space... the final frontier", before switching off ? Is Powell in the habit of making major procurement decisions on "a bit"? If so, it explains a lot of the mind-numbing garbage we import - do we **have** to endure Head Of The Class simply because Powell once saw a few seconds of it which **looked** funny ?

Of course, the really ludicrous point is that **The Next Generation**'s quality is **irrelevant**! There is a guaranteed audience for **anything** with the **Star Trek** label on it - and it is the B B C's duty, laid down in its charter, to serve its audience. In other words, **The Next Generation** should be acquired automatically, and I can't help thinking that under any of Powell's predecessors - **Grade included** - it would have been!

"SF is not popular," Powell claims, but the assertion simply does not hold any water. Only three years before his tenure, **Blake's 7** was pulling in ten million viewers against Coronation Street. **Star Trek** always did well in peak slots - it lost viewers **only** when Grade moved it to 5.40! And if **Trek** itself is so unpopular, can Powell explain why the B B C has purchased **The Search for Spock** feature film at considerable expense (after I T V chalked up such impressive figures with **The Wrath of Khan**) ? Could he also explain why **The Voyage Home** ran for four weeks at my local cinema, with queues around the block every night ? Even Mr.Grade might have relented towards SF now that Channel 4's top ten regularly includes **Lost in Space** (the first-recorded instance of garbage being recycled into a TV show).

Powell points at **The Tripods** and **Star Cops** - the former a financial and ratings disaster, the latter cancelled because the drama department were "not happy" with it - but his arguments fall down. **Tripods** failed because it was badly paced, badly made, suicidally scheduled and too long (six episodes per season would have sufficed - greed gave us thirteen). The fact that it was SF was the **least** of its problems! The fate of **Star Cops** deserves closer examination because it throws light on Powell's running of the B B C's Drama Department.

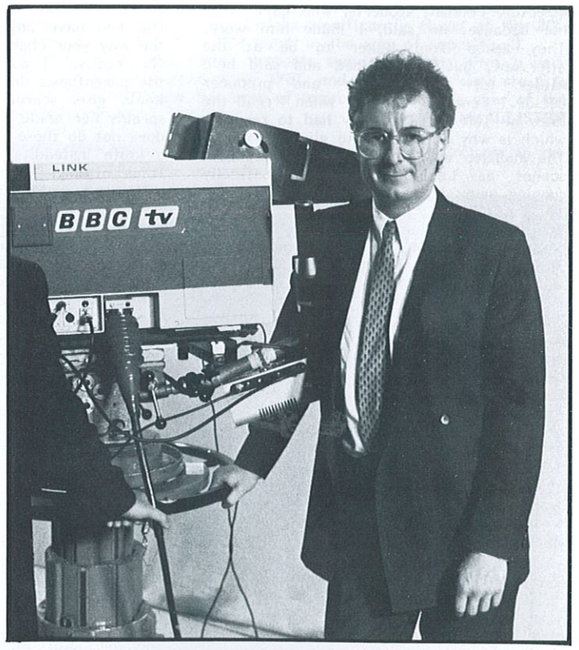
At the FalCon III convention (Bath, July 1988), Chris Boucher painted a gloomy picture of the problems he had in getting **Star Cops** made, describing it as "an attempt to sell SF to a department that didn't want to know." He stated that the Drama Department is run by people who don't like SF, don't read it, don't understand it and simply don't want to make it. They do **Doctor Who** as "token SF" once a year and that's yer lot!

Boucher believes that the ratings had doomed **Star Cops,** but Alan Yentob - the new B B C 2 Controller - has said: "...I have taken it up with the Drama Department, but I'm afraid they're not happy enough with the series to consider re-offering it..." This implies that the "problem" is the show's quality. When one speaks of the Drama Department, one really means the head of that department - at that time Jonathan Powell. The more I hear, the more I seriously question Powell's ability to judge the quality of SF, or **any** genre he happens to dislike. This in turn has cast serious consequences for the B B C's drama output and, now that Powell is B B C 1's Controller, for the rest of the channel's product as well.

A good contoller **knows** quality when he sees it, irrespective of whether it appeals to him. I don't like Howard's Way, but I can see the skill which goes in to making it and its appeal to a certain section of television viewers. Very few Sunday Classics serials have grabbed me, but I am aware of their quality. Thin Air isn't my cup of tea, but again I'm aware it's state of the art television, a pinnacle of its genre. Thus, even if Powell dislikes SF, he should be **aware** of the quality of **Star Cops.** It is ingeneously written, superbly acted, subtly designed and, by and large, its special effects are state of the art. It is innovative, pushed back the boundaries of TV, and is cinematically directed. In short I question the judgement of **any** controller who is blind to all this.

The same applies to **Star Trek - The Next Generation.** Unlike Mr.Powell, I have seen nine episodes and I believe it to be the best telefantasy currently in production. It is thought-provoking, dramatic, witty and skillfully made. It richly deserves a place on B B C 1. It **is** quality TV and Powell **should** be aware of that. **He** might not like it, but that is irrelevant - any controller duty-bound to serve a diverse public is obliged to authorise the transmission of some material which isn't to his own personal taste.

Sadly, events since 1984 indicate that Powell has very peculiar standards indeed for SF. At the time he inherited Series and Serials from David Reid, **Doctor Who** was on a high. The Davison era - a dramatic and innovative one of hardcore SF - had just finished. Colin Baker had strong B B C support and Reid had even sounded him out about a four-year commitment. Reid's **Doctor Who** record is good: he consistently supported it, pushing for publicity and repeats, approving a ninety-minute 20th anniversary special and allocating higher budgets. His predecessor, Graeme McDonald, had offered similar support, taking a close interest in every script, befriending the production crew and even attending Tom and Lalla's wedding!



A CHANGE OF HEART?

SINCE THIS ITEM went to press, there have been a couple of signs indicating that Jonathan Powell's stance on science-fiction may have altered slightly.

Although 'Doctor Who' will be off the air during 1990 to pave the way for tenderisation, Powell is known to be seriously considering commissioning a brand new S F series to be produced independently for transmission on BBC1 next year.

Furthermore, despite his negative comments he initially made concerning 'Star Trek - The Next Generation', it is understood the BBC are finally considering setting a definite date for screening of the first series some time in 1990 (which they bought three years ago!). We hope to be able to confirm these reports soon.

Compare Powell's record: Colin Baker never even met him until he **demanded** a meeting when he was sacked. Powell supported Grade's critique of Season 22 once the show was suspended, yet script-editor Eric Saward says that Powell read every single episode **before** recording and raised **no** objections! Powell demanded rewrites on **The Mysterious Planet** which ruined a good script. Powell permitted **Trial** to be done on the cheap. Saward's account of his resignation leaves some doubt as to whether Powell had any idea of events in the **Who** office - and note; Saward implies that his meetings with Powell were rare, yet Chris Bidmead has indicated that Graeme McDonald always met producer and script-editor **together.** Note also that Powell asked Saward's opinion of Colin - clearly **he** was unhappy with him, but had never said anything! And whilst the lack of repeats under Grade is unsurprising, surely one might expect that repeats would reappear once Powell - who professes to be "a fan" - became B B C 1 Controller ?

Powell **is** "a fan", but whether he is a fan of the same **Doctor Who** as the viewers is debatable. He **hated** the Davison era, and his unhappiness with the Colin Baker era is obvious. His enthusiasm for the show begins with Season 24! He declares Sylvester McCoy to be "the best Doctor we've ever had". He appointed and supported Andrew Cartmel. When the show came under virulent fan attack he defended it, insisting that it **was** popular and the ratings **were** better (blatantly ignoring the **fact** that the figures were down on the eras he so reviles).

The show has become self-mocking parody, but the sillier it is, the more Powell appears to **like** it! At the same time he dumps **Star Cops,** slags off **The Next Generation** and eradicates the legacies of Bidmead/Davison.

I believe Jonathan Powell is one of those narrow-minded people who finds all this spaceships and monsters stuff very silly. "How can people take all this seriously ?", he wonders, and thus gets very bored with shows which **do.** He likes McCoy's **Who** because it refuses to take itself absolutely seriosly - even the show's own past is whimsified.

"People do not like SF" translates into "Jonathan Powell does not like SF". If **Doctor Who** has survived his reign it is because, under **his** influence, it ceased to be **real** SF three seasons ago. It ill becomes a man who so misunderstands and underestimates the genre to presume to judge the quality of **The Next Generation.**

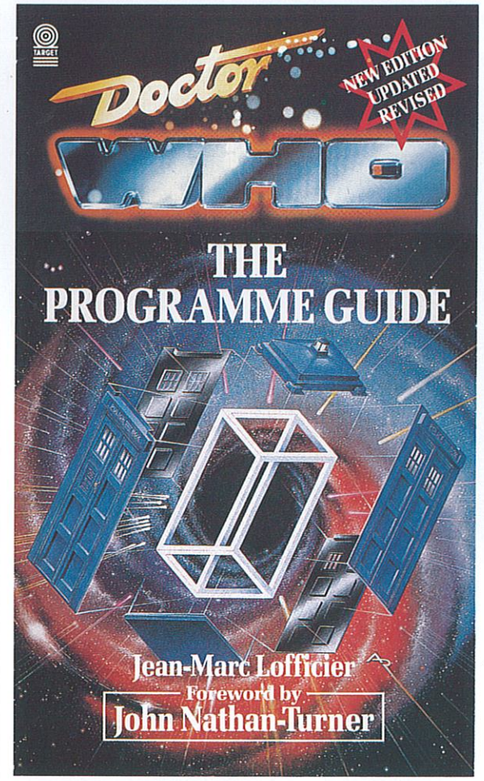
Look elsewhere, too, for signs of Powell's narrow vision. Prior to becoming Head of Drama, his expertise was limited to high quality expensive one-off series and plays, and this persists. A B B C 2 person at heart, he has little grasp of popular TV. Soap operas are a mystery to him. Julia Smith claims that, upon reading EastEnders' first script, he remarked, after a few perfunctory criticisms: "Of course, you know far more about this type of show than me, so feel free to ignore everything I've said" (and note that series' dramatic decline and loss of direction since he took over from Grade)!

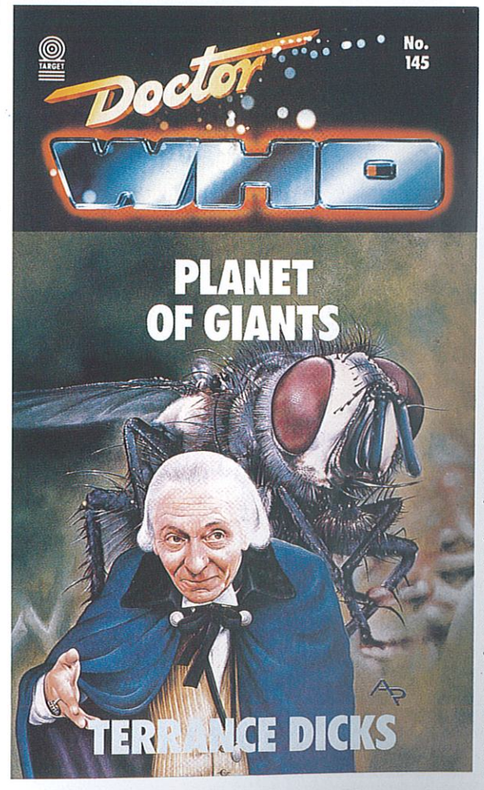
His reign has produced notable one-offs (She-Devil, Mutineer, Singing Detective, etc.), but not one popular long-running series. Shows which he began have died - Pulaski, Call Me Mister, etc. - and the shows which are still hits, like Howard's Way, All Creatures and Bergerac, all originated under his predecessors. The cheap VT-ed play has passed away, replaced by glossy TV movies. Last autumn Powell unveiled a line-up "with the emphasis on laughs", but every single **new** comedy on B B C 1 flopped abysmally. The hits were Bread (a pre-Powell series) and First Of The Summer Wine (a retread of a long-running pre-Powell success).

It is time Mr.Powell widened his vision. Shows must not live or die simply on whether **he** likes them, and if a show's genre is outside his tastes he should not try to warp it into something he **does** like. Instead he should defer to the more informed opinions of those who **do** like and understand the genre. It is time other producers were given the free hand which Powell so wisely (though obviously in a moment of sudden madness) permitted to Julia Smith's EastEnders.

I note with amusement the success of First Born late last year drawing around ten million viewers. Unfortunately its lack of spaceships and monsters is such that I doubt Powell even **realises** he's just had an SF hit right under his blinkered nose! **TIM MUNRO**

Tim Munro is co-editor of the popular 'Star Begotten' fanzine. Look out for their ads in D W B...





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